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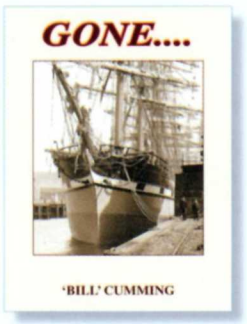
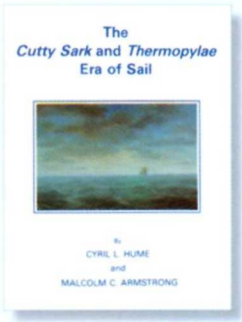


GONE....

The advent of the 4-masted Iron sailing ship unexpectedly prolonged the usefulness of windjammers into the age of steam ships. It is the human story of events at the high point of merchant sail-power between 1870 and 1907.

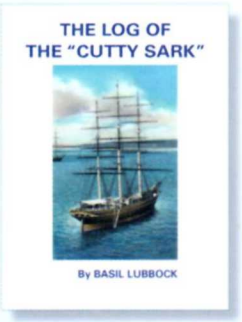
Here the careers of each of the twelve 4-masters are revealed in detail for the first time in one publication.



THE CUTTY SARK AND THERMOPYLAE ERA OF SAIL

This is a book to be read for pleasure; true anecdotes take precedence over technical reference material. It will appeal to avid collectors and to newcomers alike.

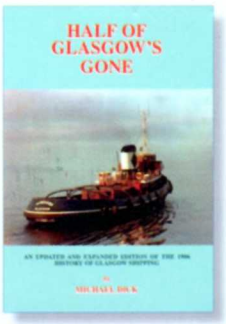
A useful glossary of nautical terms has also been included.



THE LOG OF THE CUTTY SARK

A history of the famous tea and wool clipper, Cutty Sark, considered to have been the fastest of all the clippers.

Included are numerous illustrations, scale plans of her lines, mid-ship section and sail area.



HALF OF GLASGOW'S GONE

This updated second edition describes the heyday, decline and subsequent redevelopment of Glasgow's Docks. The original photographs have been remastered with many new ones added.

This book records an important part of Glasgow's heritage and a similar pattern of change, redevelopment and regeneration can be seen in other British ports whose roots lay in the 19th century.

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FRONT COVER:

The 184,089gt Iona, P&O's newest ship departing from Southampton on 8th June.

See Cruise News on page 9.

Andrew Cooke

SEPTEMBER EDITION WILL BE ON SALE ON 10th AUGUST

NOTABLE INCIDENTS

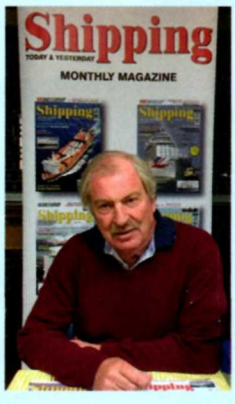
In May an Egyptian court upheld a ruling preventing the container ship that blocked the Suez Canal, the 219,079gt/2018-built **Ever Given**, from leaving the country, after authorities sought more than $900 million in compensation from the owners. The decision was announced by a court in the canal-side city of Ismailia, following a legal appeal. The 400m ship is owned by Japan's Shoei Kisen Kaisha Ltd. and is on charter to Evergreen of Taiwan. She became stranded in the southern end of the canal for 6 days in March. Another court hearing was set for 22nd May. The vessel was moved to the Great Bitter Lake when freed, but has been impounded there ever since. A total of 25 Indian crew members are aboard, with some having been relieved on compassionate grounds. The court had granted the Suez Canal Authority's request for the seizure in mid-April as the compensation talks dragged on as the SCA insisted that compensation is needed to cover losses. The situation changed again a few days later when the Suez Canal Authority slashed its compensation claim by nearly a third, seeking $600 million rather than $916 million. On 24th May came the news that Evergreen's legal team was claiming that the ship's grounding was the fault of the Suez Canal Authority whilst the Egyptian Court ruled that the detention of the ship could continue. The SCA was then reported on 24th May as saying that the Ever Given could leave once a $200 million deposit was paid. This is certainly a very 'fluid' scenario.

On 14th May the 55,487gt/2007-built containership **NYK Delphinus** (above) reported an engine fire aboard the ship. There were 24 people onboard and the ship was drifting southward parallel to the coast at a speed of around 2 knots. Two Coast Guard Air Station San Francisco MH-65 Dolphin helicopter crews transferred a dewatering pump to NYK Delphinus's crew and five tugs were asked to assist. The 295m long/32m beam NYK Delphinius was travelling from the Port of Vancouver to Oakland, California. On 17th May the NYK Delphinus was under tow to an offshore location west of Port Reyes. She had been operating on Ocean Network Express' (ONE) Atlantic 5 service when problems arose off Monterey. Upon completion of the inspection, the ship was expected to berth at the Port of Oakland. Unfortunately, the issues onboard the ship left the reefer units without power so there was a considerable loss of cargo.

The 93,227gt/2011-built **Jag Anand** finally arrived at the Chinese port of Jingtang on 16th May after being stranded at sea for 356 days. Chartered by Cargill Inc., the vessel had sailed from the port of Gladstone on 26th May 2020 laden with 174,000 tonnes of coal. She went to an anchorage off Jingtang in mid-June last year and had been waiting there ever since. The ship and her crew, along with more than 70 other bulk carriers, were essentially stranded off the coast when China implemented a ban on several Australian commodities amid worsening relations between the two countries. At least 19 ships carrying Australian coal from the height of the disagreements are still anchored off the Chinese coast. China permitted 35 of the ships to offload, while other vessels sailed away earlier in 2021 and delivered their cargo to India, Vietnam and other nations in Southeast Asia. Australian coal exports to China, once amounting to AUS$1.78 billion in June 2018 have faded to pretty much zero in 2021. The Jag Anand reportedly departed from Jingtang once more, a free ship, on 22nd May.

On 20th May a fire broke out aboard the 31,629gt/2021-built and 2,743 TEU capacity **X-Press Pearl** off Colombo (above). The ship, which was carrying around 25 tonnes of nitric acid and other chemicals among her cargo, radioed for help and the Sri Lankan navy dispatched a number of vessels to fight the fire at an anchorage 9.5 nautical miles from the port of Colombo. Owners X-Press Feeders had only taken delivery of the ship in February 2021. Environmental concerns following the cargo fire onboard saw Sri Lanka's Marine Environment Protection Agency banish the vessel from its waters on 22nd May. In total there were 1,486 containers onboard the vessel. The situation deteriorated significantly on the morning of 25th May and the crew of 25 were evacuated when there was an explosion from deep within the cargo. Poorly packed nitric acid in one container (around 25 tonnes) mixing with other chemicals started the whole incident. The ship began to sink on 1st June with 278 tonnes of fuel onboard. Now an environmental disaster threatens.

The 11,454gt/2020-built vehicle carrier **Byakko** sank on 28th May after colliding with the Korean chemical tanker **Ulsan Pioneer** off Ehime Prefecture, Western Japan.



EDITOR'S LOG

In early March 2020 Janette Bell, the then CEO of P&O Ferries stated, "We are extremely proud to be a big employer in Hull and we intend to continue our operations here for the long term. I would like to thank all of P&O Ferries' staff and seafarers working in Hull for their commitment and hard work and I look forward to their continued co-operation in providing a vital service and in improving our business."

However, having already overseen 1,100 redundancy in the lead up to Brexit, P&O pulled the plug on the Hull to Zeebrugge route in January of this year. Also, the company attracted considerable ire as it sought £150 million in emergency aid from the British government at the same time as the parent company DP World was preparing to pay a £250 million dividend.

Ms Bell also defended P&O Ferries for paying some of their crew a mere £4.50 per hour. MPs and the RMT union accused P&O Ferries of exploiting workers by paying Filipino seafarers less than £2 per hour, which the firm says is, "completely false". P&O Ferries says it cannot afford to pay more on its services and has now gone into full details of why its crew earn less than the UK minimum wage, claiming it is irrelevant to compare because seafarers do not interact at all with the UK economy. The firm also points out their wage is 6.5 times higher than the minimum wage in the Philippines and twice as much as the average salary of anyone in their home country, where they spend their income.

They also said, "Wages in shipping are unique. Yes, this basic figure is less than the UK National Minimum Wage, but that is completely irrelevant."

I find this unacceptable in this day and age. I am not just singling out P&O Ferries or Ms Bell, who left the company in August last year. They are just one example of what goes on throughout the maritime industry.

The cruise industry is particularly bad in this respect with many stewards, waiting and bar staff being paid a very small wage and relying on the generosity of passengers to supplement this meagre income by tipping the staff.

I know this is a bad time for the industry in general due to the loss of income through Covid but these seafarers have rights and it is time that the exploitation of these crews is addressed.

editor@shippingtandy.com

CONTAINER FLEETS

China United Lines increased the frequency of its Asia-Europe Express (AEX) service from 5th June due to high demand, chartering three more Panamax ships. The AEX is upgraded to a bi-weekly regular service, departing Shanghai and calling at Ningbo-Zhoushan, Xiamen, Yantian, Ho Chi Minh City, Rotterdam, Hamburg and Antwerp. The Ren Jian-prefixed ships are all chartered from compatriot shipping operator Quanzhou Ansheng Shipping while 35,881gt/2005-built Demeter is chartered from German tonnage provider Peter Doehle Schiffahrts.

CLdN has sold its container ship, the 6,901gt/2005-built Arx, to Langh Ship AB of Finland. She finished service with CLdN in mid-May and is now running on Samskip's Amsterdam-Dublin service having previously served Rotterdam-Dublin for CLdN.

CMA CGM's second LNG powered 15,000 TEU capacity containership, the CMA CGM Kimberley (above), was launched in early May at China's Jiangnan Shipyard. The ship is the second of five sisterships, the others being the CMA CGM Patagonia (launched in January) and the CMA CGM Everglades/Galapagos & CMA CGM Greenland. The latter trio will arrive in 2022. Each ship is 366m long with a 51m beam with capacity for 15,254 TEU including 1,800 reefers. They will all sail between Asia and the Mediterranean, serving CMA CGM's Mediterranean Club Express (MEX) route. In addition, French petrochemical company Total will refuel these ultra-large container ships at the port of Marseille-Fos and in Singapore via a 10 year bunkering deal back in 2019 for about 270,000 tonnes per year. The 236,583gt/2020-built CMA CGM Jacques Saade became the first megamax containership with increased draught to visit Hamburg in May as she was able to transit the newly-deepened Elbe shipping channel. The occasion was momentous for the Port as it marked the end of a contentious, long-term project to deepen the fairway. The deeper permissible draught means that such ships can now carry about 1,000 more containers to Hamburg than before. CMA CGM announced the reshuffling of its EMED Express 2 Intra Levant service set up in May, which connects Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and South Turkey. The company is deploying one vessel of 875 TEU nominal capacity on the service, which will have the following rotation: Beirut-Tripoli-Lattakia-Port Said East-Damietta-Iskenderun-Mersin. The frequency of the updated service, which is fully operated by the Marseille-based company and began on 14th May from Beirut, will be 10 days. The 176,546gt/2012-built CMA CGM Marco Polo arrived at the Port of New York and New Jersey on 20th May, becoming the largest ship to ever call on the U.S. East Coast. The ship previously called in Halifax, marking her first stop and setting the North America east coast size record. At 396m long and 53m beam, the ship has a capacity of 16,022 TEU containers. Delivered in 2012, the CMA CGM Marco Polo actually held the title as the largest containership in the world for a time, surpassing Maersk's E-Class ships including the 171,542gt/2006-built Emma Maersk. The LNG-fuelled and 23,000 TEU capacity ship, the 236,583gt/2021-built CMA CGM Trocadéro, was delivered on 27th May. The ship is No.8 of nine 400m long/61m beam sisterships being built but the fourth and last vessel from the series to be delivered by CSSC Jiangnan Shipyard.

Cosmoship Management has exercised options for another pair of 1,500 TEU capacity ships at CSSC Huangpu Wenchong Shipbuilding. The options are linked to an initial order signed on 25th January that followed delivery of a similar ship, the 16,963gt/2020-built FSL Colombo, which was one of 4 sisterships commissioned in December 2017. The options mean that Cosmoship has ordered eight 1,500 TEU capacity ships from Huangpu Wenchong.

DKT Allseas has extended its Far East to Liverpool service following the success of its temporary supply chain critical services from Shanghai and Ningbo to Liverpool, with further Far East services announced. In response to overwhelming demand, the first of the additional services started in May. The new initiative was launched by DKT Allseas at the start of April to provide relief to customers facing increased ocean freight rates, as well as reduced reliability, as a result of knock-on effects relating to the global pandemic. The first three sailings operated at full capacity, from the Far East direct to Liverpool. Peel Ports has worked with Allseas since February to facilitate this new service, which offers greater reliability.

Evergreen has made the latest move in the jostle to operate the largest containership. The 23,992 TEU capacity 215,000gt/2021-built Ever Ace will be delivered from Samsung Heavy Industries in July with her nominal intake confirmed as surpassing the HMM megamaxes by just 28 TEU to take the mantle of the world's largest, a record that has been broken on an annual or even biannual basis for the last five years. The ship, sporting a new green livery, will be deployed on Evergreen's CEM service connecting Asia with North Europe. The Ever Ace is the first of 10 in a series that Evergreen will take delivery of from both Samsung Heavy in South Korea and CSSC in China in 2021/22. The Ever Ace features a new bulbless highly-flared bow design and a full width of 24 container rows in the first bay. Lashing bridges reach four tiers high with so-called "Mickey Mouse ears" into the fifth tier. The 20,000 TEU capacity threshold was surpassed in 2017 and capacities just keep on rising.

FerrySpeed's 2,545gt/2006-built Musketier went to Swansea for refit in May and was replaced by Scot Line's 2,595gt/2001-built Scot Bay on the service from Portsmouth to the Channel Isles. The Scot Bay departed after her last duty on 20th May bound for Plymouth.

Hapag-Lloyd's 94,684gt/2015-built and 9,000 TEU Czech, owned by Czech Maritime of Turkey, suffered engine failure as she entered Ningbo Port in early May whilst operating on the Pacific South Loop (PS6). The ship was due to sail again after repairs on 10th May. This incident came hot on the heels of the 82,794gt/2005-built and 7,830 TEU capacity APL ship President Eisenhower suffering an engine room fire upon leaving the Port of Los Angeles on 28th April. The fire was extinguished by the crew but the ship was incapacitated and taken under tow by tugs to back to the Californian port for inspection. The vessel had been due to sail for Japan, South Korea and China on the Eagle Express 1, EX1, service, but the ship was still in port 6 days later.

From 19th May Hapag-Lloyd improved its current connections to Portugal with weekly departures from the ports of Lisbon and Leixões to and from Tangier Med and Rotterdam. The first departures of the new feeder services from/to Tangier Med were the 6,454gt/2005-built X-Press Vesuvio on 16th May and Leixões/Lisbon with the 6,434gt/2003-built X-Press Monte Bianco on 27th/30th May whilst the first shipments from/to Lisbon and Leixões will be the 11,550gt/2009-built Elbstar on 19th/21st May and the 8,971gt/2006-built Mastery D on 22nd May.

HMM's brand new 152,003gt/2021 built & 16,010 TEU capacity HMM Nuri made her first call in Hamburg on 15th May as the first containership in a newbuild series of 8 for Hyundai Merchant Marine (HMM). The HMM Nuri was handled at the HHLA Container Terminal Burchardkai. The HMM Nuri is a panamax format ship with a length of 366m and a beam of 51m and she is employed on the Far East Europe 4 (FE4) container service operated by The Alliance. This service calls at Busan, Shanghai, Ningbo, Yantian, Singapore, Suez, Rotterdam, Hamburg, Antwerp and Southampton. All the ships of this newbuild series carry names that are traditional in the history of Korean culture. Nuri means 'the world'. Two of the sisterships will be christened HMM Gaon, meaning 'the middle' or 'the centre' and HMM Garam, meaning 'river'. The HMM Nuri's maiden call at Southampton took place on 24th May.

MSC's 149,525gt/2020-built and 15,000 TEU capacity MSC Virgo has become the largest containership to ever visit the Port of Newark, New Jersey, U.S.A. (above).

In other news, MSC has agreed a long-term charter deal with shipowner Eastern Pacific Shipping for eleven 15,300 TEU capacity LNG dual-fuelled newbuilds. This follows similar orders by CMA CGM with Israeli carrier Zim also joining the LNG age via 12 year charters with Seaspan for ten 15,000 TEU capacity vessels for delivery in 2023.

MSC (UK) Limited has announced a new transport yard at the Port of Liverpool supporting the company's growing landside volumes and further enhancing its national road network. The new facility will be fully operational this year, with the MSC owned transport fleet increasing by up to 40 trucks based at the new site.

ONE (Ocean Network Express) has conducted a second successful trial use of sustainable marine biofuel onboard the 54,098gt/2007-built MOL Experience. The specifications of the second trial were different from the first trial, with the mixing ratio three times higher in biofuel content, taking ONE another step closer to reducing its carbon footprint. The MOL Experience was refuelled with marine biofuel during bunkering at the Port of Rotterdam, The Netherlands, on 7th March 2021. The vessel, deployed on the AL5 service, fully consumed the biofuel 24 days into the 36 day trial period, which ended on 12th April. The success of the trial once again proves the viability of sustainable biofuels, while helping ONE to meet its carbon reduction targets by 2030 and 2050 respectively.

P&O Ferries announced on 12th May the introduction of an additional ship on the Hull-Zeebrugge LO-LO service. From 1st June the 5,067gt/2000-built Freya has joined her 5,067gt/2000-built sister, Elisabeth, to double capacity on the route and allow a daily container service between the two ports. The ships are 118m long and each have capacity for 658 TEU. Sadly this is all that's left of a Hull-Zeebrugge service under the operation of the P&O brand.

P&O Maritime Logistics announced on 18th May that it was launching a new inland river route from the Caspian Sea to DP World Yarimca, connecting the Marmara region and the Caspian Sea directly. Called the Turkey-Caspian Line, this new container and breakbulk shipping operation first made a trial voyage at the end of April and is operated jointly by P&O Maritime Logistics and DP World Yarimca. The service is utilising P&O Maritime Logistics' Multi Carrying Vessel (MCV) to transport containerised products such as industrial machines, construction materials, textiles, cosmetics, white goods, and marble, while additionally offering a convenient service for breakbulk and project cargo. MCV type vessels are ideally suited to navigate the Russian rivers and it is expected that at least two more vessels will be outfitted and classed for container carriage for the new line's launch in the coming months. The state-of-the-art container terminal at DP World Yarimca, is now one of the largest in the İzmit Gulf and Turkey, with a capacity of 1.3 million TEUs and offering specialised solutions such as super-post panamax quay cranes.

Regional Container Lines (RCL) and Mariana Express Lines have formed a partnership for a new Thailand-South China service, which commenced on 5th June calling at Bangkok-Laem Chabang-Nansha-Shekou-Laem Chabang. Mariana Express Lines deploys two 1,200 TEU capacity vessels on the service, with one of these being replaced by RCL's 13,188gt/1996-built Ratana Thida in July 2021. RCL brands the service as RBS, which complements the RBH service.

Sealand, a Maersk Line subsidiary has partnered with the global pulp and paper manufacturer APRIL Group to provide a new direct service from APRIL Group's terminal in Futong, Indonesia, to China. A successful trial shipment commenced on 20th February followed a week later by a full shipment of laden containers.

Seaspan Corporation, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Atlas Corp., has taken delivery of two 8,500 TEU capacity containerships. Both ships have begun long-term charters to an undisclosed operator. However, the ships were reported as being the 91,761gt/2011-built Gulf Bridge and Mediterranean Bridge.

SM Line has expanded its fleet by acquiring the 40,839gt/2009-built and 4,228 TEU capacity Arguello (above) from Borealis Maritime. This transaction brings SM Line's controlled fleet to 12 ships with a total capacity of around 60,000 TEU.

Swire Shipping will operate a new North West Australia direct service (NWD) from June 2021, offering a direct connection between Singapore and North West Australia. The new service consists of two loops serving Singapore-Darwin-Port Hedland and Singapore-Dampier respectively. Swire Shipping will deploy a geared 7,602dwt multi-purpose vessel, the 5,316gt/2007-built Souni, on Loop 1 and Loop 2 is operated via slot access aboard the 4,562gt/2007-built Karratha Bay, a 7,520dwt vessel operated by SeaSwift. Both vessels are capable of carrying containerised, out-of-gauge and breakbulk cargo.

Trade Wings 2500, a low-carbon feedership container vessel design, has been developed by France's yacht designer VPLP, consultancy Alwena, and Oceanwings, sail designer Ayro and major Chinese naval architecture company SDARI. The 2,500 TEU capacity, 197m long and 32m beam Trade Wings design has received its Approval in Principle from classification society Bureau Veritas. Trade Wings features a combination of a wind-assisted propulsion with six Oceanwings and LNG-electric propulsion with pods. The wing sails are installed on a vertical sliding mechanism to retract them partially while the vessel is in port, thus minimising the impact on cargo operations. In addition, the initial design will have an LNG storage tank based on the Mark III containment system designed by another French company, GTT. Trade Wings is designed with gas only four-stroke generator sets. A feature of this design is that the gensets can be upgraded at a later date to operate on zero carbon fuels including ammonia and hydrogen. The new design is suitable for shortsea shipping operations or feeder services in Europe, Central America, Caribbean Islands and China. On a Transatlantic trip of around 4,000nm, the designers estimate that the vessel will on average save 35% CO_2 equivalent emissions compared to a conventional design, with a 2-stroke engine, single shaft vessel at the same speed.

Wan Hai Lines launched a new Asia-South America West Coast service in mid-May with ten 2,200 TEU capacity ships. The AS1 route will call at Kaohsiung, Shekou, Ningbo, Qingdao, Ensenada, Manzanillo, Buenaventura, Callao and San Antonio before returning to Kaohsiung. As each ship would need 70 days to complete a round voyage, it was decided to assign 10 vessels to the service. The company also announced on 14th May that it planned to purchase four 13,100 TEU capacity ships that Capital Maritime & Trading originally commissioned at Samsung Heavy Industries in February 2021. Back in December 2020, Wan Hai earmarked funds totalling $360 million to buy second-hand ships and the company has purchased 11 ships.

In May **Yang Ming** took delivery of another new 11,000 TEU capacity ship, as part of an order of 14 identical newbuildings and following the delivery of the YM Target in February. The 115,761gt/2021-built new ship will carry the simply delightful name of YM Tiptop!

BULK and TANKER NEWS

dship Carrier's latest 11,494gt/2021-built F-500 multipurpose vessel is the Ronnie (above), which departed from the shipyard in late April and made her way to Taicang, China. For the maiden voyage, she loaded 637 TEU containers to Liverpool. Another product of dship Carrier's expansion, the new F-500 vessel is equipped with a Becker Mewis Duct device and Becker Rudder that produce lower fuel consumption. The Becker Mewis Duct is an energy-saving device developed for full-form slower ships enabling either significant power savings at a given speed or, allowing the vessel to travel faster at a given power level. The Ronnie is dships' 15th vessel and has a cargo capacity of 12,500 tonnes and lifting capacities ranging from 240 tonnes to 500 tonnes. dship Carriers was founded in 2014 by Thomas C. Press, who is also the owner and CEO of Deugro, and specialises in the transport of breakbulk, dry bulk and project cargo.

Flex LNG has secured a time-charter deal (3 years minimum) for its LNG carrier Flex Constellation. The ship was delivered from DSME to Flex LNG in 2019, is fitted with an MEGI propulsion system, a partial reliquefaction system (PRS) and has the capacity for 173,400m^3 of chilled LNG.

Navigazione Montanari Group announced on 4th May that it had secured a €35 million loan over a 6 year period via subsidiary Euromont Shipping S.p.A. and backed by the Italian export credit agency SACE through its Garanzia Italia facility. Founded in 1889, the Navigazione Montanari Group has been operating for more than 120 years in shipping products for the oil and petrochemical sectors. Through the loan facility, Navigazione Montanari has concluded the purchase of two tankers which, by replacing some older ships decommissioned during the previous year, will enable the Company to continue the renewal of its fleet.

Titan LNG, a Dutch independent supplier of LNG as a marine fuel, has launched a development tender for a new LNG bunkering barge, the Titan Krios. The company aims to increase the accessibility of LNG as a marine fuel in the Port of Zeebrugge and in the English Channel ports. The new vessel, which will fulfil part of the demand for LNG in Zeebrugge that Titan LNG is already supplying, will operate with multiple tanks to segregate streams of LNG and bio-LNG. In line with The newbuild will have cargo conditioning equipment and 2 bow thrusters for easy manoeuvring. Titan LNG's design philosophy, the Krios is a compact seagoing LNG bunker vessel with a 4,200m^3 capacity. The first delivery is expected to be fulfilled in 2023.

TMS Cardiff Gas took delivery of the Shell-chartered 116,542gt/2021 built newbuild LNGShips Manhattan from the South Korean shipyard of Hyundai Heavy Industries on 7th May. The vessel is owned by LNGShips and joins LNGShips Athena and LNGShips Empress on charter with Shell. The ships can carry 174,000m^3 of LNG and feature GTT's Mark IIi Flex containment system. LNGShips Manhattan is the 100th LNG carrier built by Hyundai Heavy Industries and Hyundai Samho Heavy Industries that features a GTT containment system. The ship also features WinGD X-DF dual-fuel, low-pressure engines and is the final vessel in TMS Cardiff Gas' newbuild series of 11 LNG tankers delivered in 2020-2021. The ships are operating on charter for companies including Total and Vitol Shell.

PORT NEWS

APM Terminals (APMT) and Hutchison Ports announced on 10th May that Hutchison Ports Netherlands B.V., a subsidiary of Hutchison Ports, had signed an agreement to acquire the Rotterdam container terminal APM Terminals Rotterdam (APMTR) from APMT. This facility is located adjacent to Hutchison Ports' existing ECT Delta terminal in the Maasvlakte area of the port and a 1,600m of deep-water quay serviced by 13 ship-to-shore gantry cranes.

Associated British Ports (ABP), has invested around £140,000 to enhance facilities at the Port of Troon including refurbishment of the port's main entrance lighthouse and West pier linkspan and the installation of two new automatic access control barriers and security fencing to enhance health, safety and security at the port. There are proposals for a 870m^2 concrete deck which could accommodate the Arran ferry, operated by CalMac. Troon could become the departure and arrival point for the ferry for the next two years if the plans are approved while the main terminal at Ardrossan, is undergoing a multi-million pound redevelopment.

Calais Port 2015 (above) was officially handed over on 5th May by the builders after nearly 6 years to extend the port of Calais to doubles in area. Three new berths and two modern buildings are now in situ to welcome the first ferry services from October 2021. The 47,592gt/2012-built Spirit of France was the first ferry to visit the new facility during an overnight session of berthing trials on 8th May.

DEME Group has won a contract for the maintenance dredging of the River Elbe in Germany, together with their joint venture partner Van Oord. The maintenance work covers the stretch of the fairway from Hamburg to Cuxhaven. Several trailing suction hopper dredgers were deployed on this project from May onwards for a period of 12 months. DEME previously completed the deepening of the River Elbe, which improved navigation for the mega container carriers to call into Hamburg with less dependency on the state of the tide.

The States' Trading Supervisory Board (STSB) is proposing construction of a new port for freight and fuel imports that would free up valuable space around the island's existing main harbours of St. Peter Port and St. Sampson's. The recommendation comes after a comprehensive review of the island's harbour requirements that has culminated in the conclusion that all commercial port activity is moved away from St Sampson's Harbour to a new facility south of the Longue Hougue land reclamation site. This would leave the current harbour to focus on providing facilities for leisure boats. The proposed new Longue Hougue South port would require land reclamation after the building of an outer breakwater to enclose an area that can be infilled using inert waste materials from the construction and demolition industry.

The Suez Canal Authority has unveiled plans to widen and deepen a 30km stretch of the waterway between Suez and the Great Bitter Lake. The Egyptian President, Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, has given his approval for the start of work, to be completed in 24 months. The southern section of the canal will be widened and the draught will be increased to 72 feet. This is no doubt intended to reduce the risk of another incident as major as the grounding of the Ever Given.

NO STARS, JUST STRIPES

Following the enthusiastic reception to the 181,808gt/2020-built Mardi Gras' red, white and blue livery (above), the hull design will be applied across the Carnival Cruise Line fleet. The change will take place as Carnival prepares to celebrate its 50th birthday in 2022. The 128,048gt/2011-built Carnival Magic was noted in dry dock in Marseilles in May and she will be the first of the Carnival Cruise Line fleet to receive the new livery after the Mardis Gras. The Mardi Gras departed Barcelona for Port Canaveral on 21st May and was due to make her maiden arrival in the U.S.A on 4th June. When Carnival Cruise Line's newest ship does arrive, she will be flying the Bahamian flag to designate the new ship registry for the first LNG passenger ship to operate in North America. Back on 14th May the "classic" Carnival ship 70,538gt/1993-built Carnival Sensation arrived in Mobile for the first time to an enthusiastic welcome. After her arrival, the ship's crew members had the opportunity to get vaccinated in the cruise terminal by representatives of USA Health. The ship will be based at the Alabama Cruise Terminal and is being made ready for the anticipated gradual return to cruise operations.

FLAGSHIP TRIALS

The 99,500gt/2021-built Rotterdam (above), Holland America Line's new Pinnacle Class flagship completed her sea trials on 6th May off the coast of Italy with delivery scheduled for 30th July. The ship had departed from Fincantieri's Marghera (Venice) shipyard in Italy on 25th April for 2 days on preliminary trials, then visited Fincantieri's Trieste shipyard for dry docking (standard pre-delivery hull maintenance and painting) before the full official sea trials began on 3rd May. The Rotterdam is the third vessel in the Pinnacle Class series, she will carry 2,668 guests and is the 7th to bear the name for Holland America Line and the 17th ship constructed for the brand by Fincantieri. The previous Rotterdam (61,847gt/built 1997) was sold to Fred. Olsen Cruise Line in 2020 and is now their Borealis.

NEW SPIRIT

On 12th May Sea Cloud Cruises announced that the new 5,431gt/2021-built Sea Cloud Spirit had been delivered from the shipyard in Vigo, Spain. She had passed all necessary tests, and her maiden voyage has been set for 14th September for a 10-night roundtrip from Civitavecchia. She will spend the autumn in the Western Mediterranean and the upcoming winter season in the Canary Islands. As cruising makes its return, the newbuild with a capacity of only 136 guests, is expected to become a nice alternative for younger guests looking for a smaller cruise experience. The Sea Cloud Spirit will become the third ship for Sea Cloud Cruises, who already operate the 2,532gt/1931-built Sea Cloud and the 3,849gt/2000-built Sea Cloud II. The Sea Cloud is the oldest sailing passenger ship in the world and has a history unlike any ship ever built. First, as a private yacht for American socialite Marjorie Merriweather Post, then a floating diplomatic palace for leaders from all over the world, and later a warship ship for the Americans during WWII. The story of the Sea Cloud is more interesting than the average novel. In 2021 she celebrates her 90th birthday, and it is fitting that the newbuild arrives the same year.

PRIMA!

On 12th May Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL) announced that cruises for the company's first Project Leonardo ship, the 142,500gt and 294m long Norwegian Prima were going on sale. NCL has been an innovator in global cruise travel with a 54-year history of breaking boundaries, and the Prima Class, the company's first new class of ships in nearly 10 years, is no exception. The ship, the first of 6, will be able to accommodate 3,215 guests at double occupancy and will arrive on the scene in 2022 once delivered by Fincantieri's Marghera Shipyard in Italy. The vessel will be a game-changer for NCL, offering guests exciting itineraries, more wide-open spaces, thoughtful and stunning design and a variety of new experiences. The new vessel will feature striking hull artwork designed by Italian graffiti artist Manuel Di Rita, known commonly as "Peeta". For the first time on any NCL vessel, the hull art extends to the forward superstructure of the ship (artist's impression above).

A NEW AMBASSADOR FOR CRUISING

On 13th May came the pleasing news that a new UK cruise line was to be launched, namely Ambassador Cruise Line, providing a significant signal for the return of the UK travel economy and the first new British cruise line since 2010. Sales commenced June 2021 and the inaugural cruises are scheduled for Spring 2022. Ambassador Cruise Line will offer a premium-value, authentic and friendly cruise experience, sailing for the British market from its home port of London Tilbury, with no-fly itineraries aimed primarily at the over 50s market. Ambassador Cruise Line's first ship is "the one that got away" in the form of the 70,285gt/1991-built, 251m long and 2,050 passenger capacity Satoshi, to be renamed Ambience for her new career. Back in 1991 the ship, ordered by Sitmar Cruises, was delivered to Princess Cruises by the Fincantieri shipyard in Monfalcone, Italy as the Regal Princess. She was christened by Margaret Thatcher. In 2007 the ship was transferred to P&O Cruises Australia and, after major refurbishment, was renamed Pacific Dawn, operating from Australia to South Pacific destinations. The plan was to dispose of the ship from the P&O Australia fleet in 2020 by way of a sale to Cruise & Maritime Voyages (CMV). She was to be renamed Amy Johnson for a debut in spring 2021, but this was not meant to be as CMV went into administration in July 2020 thanks to the pandemic. Later that year the Pacific Dawn was sold to Ocean Builders Central, and renamed Satoshi. They intended to use her as a floating residence in the Gulf of Panama but, having failed to obtain insurance for the proposed operation (a fairly vital part of any such project!), she was resold. Initially the ship departed Panama with the destination of Turkey and reported fate of being scrapped. However, en-passage the destination changed and the ship went to lay up in Montenegro to await a new chapter in her life. The ship is an ideal start-up ship with 798 cabins (23% with balcony), ample deck space and offering five different restaurants, two cafes, nine lounges, a swimming pool and a spa. The maiden season for the Ambience will commence on 6th April 2022 with an inaugural short-break cruise to Hamburg, before embarking on a mixed itinerary programme with sailings to the Norwegian Fjords and the British Isles planned throughout spring.

Through funds managed by Njord Partners LLP, London, the new cruise company is fully equity-financed (no financial debt). The Chair of the Board of Directors is Gordon Wilson who has over 30 years' experience in the global travel industry. Ambassador has an extremely experienced management team, including several who were previously with Cruise & Maritime Voyages (CMV) led by CEO, Christian Verhounig and supported by CCO, Christopher Coates, CIO, Gary Hides and CFO, Simon Weeks. The company is based in Purfleet, Essex, where around 100 jobs will be created. As is fast becoming the norm, Ambassador Cruise Line will additionally operate a policy that all guests and crew will need to be vaccinated prior to setting sail to provide that additional peace of mind.

IONA'S HOMECOMING

Andrew Cooke

Having been handed over to P&O Cruises on 9th October in Bremerhaven by Meyer Werft Shipyard, the new 184,089gt/2020-built Iona finally reached her homeport of Southampton for the first time on the morning of 16th May in some rather unseasonal weather (above). Almost the only sunshine to greet the ship was as she passed Cowes, inward bound, with plenty of celebratory whistle blowing. Tugs greeted her off Calshot and escorted her up to Ocean Terminal. Captain Wesley Dunlop was in command. The UK's first LNG powered cruise ship had been in exile since handover, largely spending her time between Rotterdam and Norway. Visits were made to the cruise terminal in Rotterdam plus the ship could bunker LNG at both the Dutch port and Haugesund in Norway. There is the first gin still on a cruise ship, created in association with Salcombe Gin, distilling tailor made spirit onboard. The gin's maiden production will take place in Iona's custom-made still named "Columba" and will be distilled, bottled and labelled onboard. The 345m long, 42m beam, 17-knot and 5,200 guest capacity Iona has 2,614 guest cabins (26 suites, 95 conservatory mini-suites, 1,486 balcony cabins, 174 sea view cabins, 811 inside cabins and 22 single occupancy cabins) and is the largest ship ever to fly the UK flag. The ship's maiden voyage will depart on 7th August, a Staycation cruise. On 16th May the naming ceremony took place some 427 days since P&O Cruises paused operations due to the pandemic.

LUMINOSA RESTARTS

Nigel Lawrence

On 16th May Costa Cruises announced that the 92,720gt/2009-built Costa Luminosa (above) was resuming her cruise itineraries that day from the port of Trieste, becoming the company's second ship in 2021 to return to service and the first to resume cruises in the Adriatic Sea and Greece. Overall, Costa has a total of four ships scheduled to resume cruises this summer. Health and safety procedures have been enhanced through the adoption of the Costa Safety Protocol, developed by the company together with scientific experts and Italian authorities, which contains operational measures related to all aspects of the cruise experience, both onboard and ashore. The measures include a reduction in the number of guests, swab tests for all guests before embarkation and after half of the cruise, swab tests for the crew before embarkation and regularly during their stay onboard, temperature checks every day, every time guests disembark and re-enter the ship, and every time they enter the restaurants, visits to destinations only with protected excursions, social distancing onboard and in the terminals, new ways of using onboard services, enhanced sanitation and medical services, and the use of protective masks when necessary.

On 1st May the 185,010gt/2019-built flagship Costa Smeralda departed from Savona with an itinerary exclusively dedicated to Italy and on 26th June the 92,720gt/2010-built Costa Deliziosa will restart with week-long cruises in Greece. Then, on 4th July the 135,516gt/2020-built Costa Firenze, the new ship inspired by the Florentine Renaissance, will enter service with 1 week cruises in Italy. In addition, from 3rd July the Costa Smeralda will begin sailing in international itineraries, with one-week cruises encompassing ports of call in Italy, France and Spain.

WISH TOWER

Disney Cruise Line revealed on 14th May that the 135,000gt newbuild Disney Wish will offer a first-of-its-kind Wish Tower Suite, two-storey accommodation set high in the forward funnel of the ship, which makes her debut in summer 2022. With an elegant design inspired by Walt Disney Animation Studios' "Moana," unrivalled ocean views and premium Disney service, this penthouse will be a celebration of the enchantment and spirit of the sea. The suite will comfortably sleep up to 8 guests with two main bedrooms, a children's room, a library that converts to a bedroom and four-and-a-half bathrooms. The Disney Wish will sail on her maiden voyage on 9th June, 2022, followed by a season of 3- and 4-night cruises to Nassau, Bahamas, and Disney's private island, Castaway Cay, from Port Canaveral, Florida.

THE VIKING FLEET GROWS

Nigel Lawrence

Viking announced on 6th May that it planned to restart operations in the Mediterranean with new ocean voyages for vaccinated guests beginning this summer. The 47,842gt/2021-built Viking Venus and 47,842gt/2016-built Viking Sea will homeport in Valletta and sail two different 11 day roundtrip itineraries in the Mediterranean. The Viking Venus made her debut call at Portsmouth on 10th May, departing again on 13th May to rendezvous with the 47,842gt/2015-built Viking Star in Weymouth Bay for a photo call. The latter then headed for the Med whilst the Viking Venus was back in Portsmouth on 15th May. The ship was named at the port on 17th May by Anne Diamond and began a series of Staycation Cruises on 22nd May. Part of Viking's Welcome Back collection, the 8 day staycation voyages also call in Liverpool, the Isles of Scilly, Falmouth and Portland. She is seen above off Alderney on 28th May. Viking are adding a third ship to sail roundtrip voyages from Valletta, Malta July-October. The Viking Star is joining the Viking Venus and Viking Sea and will sail a new 11-day itinerary, Malta and the Western Mediterranean.

BACK TO ALASKA

Carnival Corporation announced on 20th May that three of its brands, Carnival Cruise Line, Princess Cruises and Holland America Line, were expected to return to service in the U.S.A from July with Alaska sailings departing directly from Seattle. Each company will relaunch itineraries in July with one ship sailing round-trip from Seattle. All guests will be required to be fully vaccinated. Plans for these itineraries to fulfil obligations under the Passenger Vessel Services Act (PVSA) were expected to be approved. Carnival cited recent guidance from the U.S. Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and close collaboration with Alaskan officials for the restart. These Alaska cruises are available for guests who have received their final dose of an approved COVID-19 vaccine at least 14 days prior to the beginning of the cruise and have proof of vaccination. Crew vaccinations will be in accordance with CDC guidelines.

Princess Cruises will resume operations on 25th July (until 26th September) with 7 day cruises onboard the 144,216gt/2017-built Majestic Princess.

Holland America Line will resume 7 day itineraries aboard the 86,273gt/2010-built Nieuw Amsterdam from 24th July (until 2nd October) and Carnival Cruise Line will offer 7 day sailings from Seattle as from 27th July (until 14th September) onboard the 85,942gt/2004-built Carnival Miracle.

Royal Caribbean International is also returning to Alaska, deploying the 90,090gt/2003-built Serenade of the Seas and 168,666gt/2016-built Ovation of the Seas from 19th July and 17th August respectively from Seattle and Washington.

Celebrity Cruises announced that the 91,003gt/2001-built Celebrity Summit will resume Alaska cruises from 23rd July.

NCL will return to the Alaska circuit from 7th August with week-long voyages aboard the 168,028gt/2018-built Norwegian Bliss.

FIRST CRUISE OF 2021

Pam Massey

MSC Cruises' 181,541gt/2021-built MSC Virtuosa made her debut at Southampton on the afternoon of 12th May (above), arriving at the City Cruise Terminal around 14.30 with a water spray escort courtesy of the 206gt/2007-built tug Svitzer Harty. The ship was then made ready to embark upon her maiden voyage around the British Isles on 20th May. The MSC Virtuosa became the 3rd MSC Cruises ship to go back to sea, the others being the Mediterranean based MSC Seaside (153,516gt/2017-built) and 181,541gt/2019-built MSC Grandiosa. The latter has been sailing in the Mediterranean since August 2020 under a strict health and safety protocol, including universal testing upon embarkation, which has been developed with a Blue-Ribbon Panel of experts. The MSC Virtuosa duly departed Southampton at 19.00 on 20th May on her maiden voyage and the first passenger cruise from a U.K port since the pandemic closed the industry down in March 2020. The ship will be sailing with a reduced capacity of 1,000 guests under government guidance. The first cruise included a call at Portland in Dorset before the second departure from Southampton on 24th May. With only a few ports in the Baltic and Northern Seas open for cruising this summer, MSC Cruises has been forced to cancel its proposed summer season sailings from the German ports of Warnemünde and Hamburg using the 139,072gt/2013-built MSC Preziosa and the 92.409gt/2006-built MSC Musica, respectively.

NEWS IN BRIEF

ABP Southampton has announced plans to install a second Shore Power connection at the Port of Southampton, continuing its support for sustainable cruising. Following the announcement that Shore Power is one of the leading environmental features incorporated into the design of the port's new Horizon Cruise Terminal, ABP has confirmed that the Mayflower Cruise Terminal is also set to be equipped with the same 'plug in' technology.

Nigel Lawrence

AIDA Cruises has extended the Canary Islands cruise season of the 125,572gt/2017-built AIDAperla (above) to July, offering new departures from Las Palmas, Gran Canaria on 12th /19th and 26th June 2021. On 10th July AIDA Cruises will open its cruise season with the 125,572gt/2017-built AIDAperla. AIDA Cruises has announced sailings for the winter 2021-22 season of the 183,200gt/ newbuild AIDAcosma. Her debut season will feature 7 day cruises around the Canary Islands, which will be preceded by a special Christmas-New Year's Eve voyage departing on 22nd December from Hamburg to Gran Canaria. She will be powered by LNG.

Celebrity Cruises announced on 5th May that the Galapagos Islands sailings would resume from 4th July when the 5,922gt/2019-built mega yacht Celebrity Flora was the first to return to service, followed by the award-winning 2,937gt/2001-built Celebrity Xpedition and the 242gt/2007-built and 16 passenger Celebrity Xploration on 24th July, and 18th September, respectively. The 30,818gt/2018-built Celebrity Edge will become the first cruise ship to sail from a U.S port since the pandemic shutdown when she begins 7 night Caribbean sailings from Fort Lauderdale on 26th June. The 121,878gt/2009-built Celebrity Equinox will also re-enter service from 18th July.

RCI UPDATE

Nigel Lawrence

Royal Caribbean International's 226,963gt/2016-built Harmony of the Seas (above) left drydock at Navantia in Cadiz, Spain on 1st May after an almost month-long drydocking for the Oasis-class ship. The other ships are scheduled to be the 90,090gt/2004-built Jewel of the Seas (5th May), the 228,081gt/2018-built Symphony of the Seas and 155,889gt/2007-built Liberty of the Seas.

On 14th May came the confirmation that Royal Caribbean was making key onboard changes aboard the 168,666gt/2014-built Quantum of the Seas due to a warning from the Singapore Government as they announced a "Phase 2 - Heighten Alert" for the coronavirus. Royal Caribbean International responded quickly and made key product changes to the "seacation" non-landing cruises, which took effect from 17th May. The adjustments included guest capacity reduced to 25% occupancy, groups limited to two guests, all restaurants closed and guests received room service options or "grab and go" from select restaurants aboard, capacity for live entertainment shows were reduced to a maximum of 50 guests and live singing was not be available, onboard activities such as those in Seaplex, Activity Zone and Pool Zone, continued to operate at reduced capacity and with enhanced social distancing measures plus masks were required in the indoor pool.

Due to the increasing hostilities between Israel and Palestine, the 167,704gt/2021-built Odyssey of the Seas' Israel Season was announced as cancelled on 14th May. The ship relocated from Haifa amid ongoing violence in the region which has brought to an abrupt end the ground-breaking homeporting operation in Israel that was seen as the saviour of the ship's maiden season. The Odyssey will instead relocate to Port Canaveral.

Crystal Cruises revealed on 7th May that it is adding 15 new Caribbean sailings departing on round trips from St. Maarten aboard the 51,044gt/1995-built Crystal Symphony August-December 2021. On 25th May Crystal Expedition Cruises' 20,200gt/2021-built expedition yacht Crystal Endeavor concluded her sea trials. The ship has been built at MV Werften in Germany with the final trials running 20th-23rd May. The ship was scheduled for her technical delivery on 27th May.

Dream Cruises' 150,695gt/2017-built World Dream will also continue to offer their cruises to nowhere for Singapore residents and with the same restrictions plus the requirement that outdoor activities or any activities without face masks are temporarily suspended. In Taiwan, Dream Cruises suspended operations of the 75,338gt/1999-built Explorer Dream until 8th June, following instructions from the Maritime and Port Bureau following the elevation on 11th May of Taiwan's epidemic warning to Level 2 by the Central Epidemic Command Centre.

Nigel Lawrence

Meanwhile, in Malaysia Genting Cruise Lines postponed Star Cruises' launch of the 40,053gt/1990-built Star Pisces (above) from Penang following a government mandated nationwide lockdown that began on 12th May. The company had planned to operate 2 night scenic cruises to Langkawi from 13th May.

Fred. Olsen Cruise Line's former ships Boudicca (28,551gt/built 1973) and Black Watch (28,613gt/1972-built) have resided in Turkey since departing from lay-up in Rosyth in October/November 2020 bound for Pendik after being sold as floating accommodation vessels to Istanbul-based Miray International. The information given at that time said that the ships would be adapted for static use as shipyard accommodation vessels at Cadiz in connection with various cruise ship refits. However, the pair went directly to Turkey and then did not move again until the Boudicca (above) arrived at Aliaga and was beached for scrapping on 19th May. Sister Black Watch was due to follow suit. The third in the Royal Viking trio, the 28,518gt/1973-built Albatros, remains in the ownership of the Egyptian Pick Albatros Group, who are using her as a floating hotel in Hurghada on the Red Sea.

Heritage Expeditions, a pioneering New Zealand-based expedition cruise company, established in 1985, announced on 19th May that it will be operating the world-renowned 8,445gt/1991-built Polar exploration vessel formerly known as the Hanseatic (Hapag-Lloyd) and RCGS Resolute from May 2022. Rechristened Heritage Adventurer, this identity is intended to marry the history of the vessel with the legacy of HMS Adventure's explorations alongside HMS Resolution during Captain Cook's second expedition of the Pacific. Built in 1991 at Finland's Rauma shipyard and specifically designed for Polar exploration, the Heritage Adventurer is 125m long, boasts a 1A Super Ice Class and an impressive history of Polar and remote region exploration. Originally designed to accommodate 184 guests, Heritage Expeditions intends to operate Heritage Adventurer with a maximum of just 140 expeditioners to create a spacious, comfortable onboard experience. The Heritage Adventurer will enter service in the Russian Far East, including Wrangel Island in May 2022, before venturing southwards through the South Pacific to New Zealand the Subantarctic Islands and down into the Ross Sea.

Holland America Line announced on 5th May that it had received approval to restart cruising from Piraeus from 15th August, with four departures aboard the 86,273gt/2008-built Eurodam. The Eurodam had called Torbay her home for much of the time since January and said farewell on 12th May to make her way to the Mediterranean.

P&O Cruises Australia announced in May a 6 week extension to the cruising pause, to 17th September 2021. The extension to the voluntary pause applies to cruises scheduled to depart from 31st July to the new date. The extended pause was applied as the cruise industry continues to work with relevant government authorities to establish a pathway for the restart of cruising in Australia. P&O Cruises then confirmed on 18th May that the remaining 2021 international itineraries would be replaced by Australian domestic cruises in light of the continued uncertainty. This concerns cruises scheduled between 18th September and 31st December this year.

PeaceBoat of Japan announced in May that they will have two ships in their fleet for 2022. The 77,441gt/1997-built Pacific World (above) joins the company from P&O Australia/Princess Cruises (former Sun Princess) whilst the Zenith will remain in the fleet despite rumour to the contrary. The latter had not yet operated for Peaceboat due to the pandemic (she joined the company in 2020) but will do so in August 2022.

Scenic Cruises' next newbuild, the Scenic Eclipse II, had her keel-laying ceremony on 12th May at the Maj 3 shipyard in Rijeka, Croatia (above). Sister ship to the 17,545gt/2019-built Scenic Eclipse, the 22,498gt Scenic Eclipse II is the second coveted Discovery Yacht from The Scenic Group in their ocean fleet and is due to make her debut in the Mediterranean in early 2023. The newbuild will be 168m long with a 21.5m beam and accommodation for 228 guests in 6-star all-inclusive luxury. With an on-board staff-to-guest ratio of almost 1:1, there is an abundance of personal space to allow for social distancing if required.

TUI Cruises resumed operations in Greece on 13th May 2021 with a departure of the 98,785gt/2016-built Mein Schiff 5 on a roundtrip from Crete the following day, with passengers having boarded the previous day. TUI Cruises had already offered cruises around the Greek islands last September, at that time on the 98,811gt/2017-built Mein Schiff 6, with a return to shore excursions too for the first time since the pandemic struck. The summer 2021 cruises around Greece also permit guests to go on excursions arranged or managed by the cruise line only. Since July 2020, more than 80,000 guests had travelled with the Mein Schiff fleet despite the coronavirus. TUI Cruises later announced plans to place the 111,554gt/2019-built Mein Schiff 2 (above) into service from Palma as from 17th June for Mediterranean cruises with organised shore excursions.

Windstar Cruises officially took delivery of the 12,969gt/1992-built Star Legend back from the Fincantieri shipyard in Palermo, Italy, on 21st May after completion of her part of the company's $250 million Star Plus Initiative. The ship begins cruising in Northern Europe on 4th September with the Belles of the British Isles roundtrip from London. Windstar Cruises embarked on its Star Plus Initiative in 2019 with plans to stretch all three Star Plus Class ships, the Star Breeze, Star Legend and Star Pride, which inserted a new section into each ship with 50 new suites, new and redesigned public spaces and additional amenities. Guest capacity increased from 212 to 312 guests and two new restaurants have been added.

BC Ferries' third Island-class hybrid-electric ferry, with the temporary identification of Island 3, got underway to British Columbia on 19th May after departing from Damen Shipyards Galati in Romania. The as-yet unnamed vessel will make the transatlantic voyage under her own power in approximately 60 days. The approximately 10,700 nautical mile journey will include two stops for refuelling, first in Tenerife, Canary Islands then in Balboa, Panama after transitting the Panama Canal. The vessel will sail up the west coast of North America, arriving at Point Hope Maritime in Victoria, B.C.

CLdN's chartered 32,936gt/2018-built Alf Pollak from Tirrenia Ro-Ro arrived at Rotterdam from Livorno on 14th May. She joins the company for services to Dublin etc. along with the 23,235gt/2003-built Cadena 3.

DFDS reported that freight volumes in April were up 49.8% on April 2020 whilst passenger numbers were on a par with April 2020, reflecting the negative impact of Covid-19 related travel restrictions in both periods. In the Baltic Sea, passenger numbers were above 2020 numbers. The 33,313gt/2014-built Ark Dania had stepped down from the Dunkerque-Rosslare service by mid-May with a revised schedule beginning on 17th May. A further development saw the 21,858gt/1997-built Pelagos conclude her charter in late May, reducing the fleet to two vessels (24,418gt/2001-built Kerry and Visby) and the frequency decreased to five sailings each way per week. The Newcastle-Ijmuiden service is managing to maintain operation in 2021 thanks to healthy levels of freight that are making the crossings viable. Hopefully the regular passenger service won't be too long in returning for the 31,788gt/1987-built King Seaways and 31,356gt/1986-built Princess Seaways. The route celebrated its 26th anniversary on 18th May.

Finnlines Newbuilding Programme progressed as planned, on schedule and as budgeted on 12th May at the Nanjing Jinling shipyard when the keel was laid for the second hybrid Ro-Ro vessel, the 64,575gt/2022-built Finneco II. The ship is part of Finnlines' €500 million newbuilding programme that also includes two eco-sustainable Ro-Pax vessels in addition to the three hybrid Ro-Ro vessels.

Neill Rush

FRS' 992gt/2001-built San Gwann and 4,995gt/1997-built Tarifa Jet (above) entered service on the Ibiza- Formentera and Alcudia-Ciutadela services respectively in May/June as competition increased in the Balearic Islands. The announcement came 2 days after GNV revealed plans to enter this market.

Gozo Fast Ferry's two new passenger catamarans arrived in Grand Harbour, Valletta, Malta, on 13th May as deck cargo from Singapore aboard the 13,816gt/2011-built and 148m long Angus. Both 39m long vessels can carry 300 passengers per trip and will make the journey from Gozo to Grand Harbour in less than 45 minutes. The 390gt/2018-built duo were the Majestic Faith and Majestic Wisdom but have been renamed Your Faith and Your Wisdom and were expected to enter service from 1st June.

Grimaldi

Grimaldi Lines' 32,825gt/2012-built Eurocargo Bari (above) arrived in Antwerp on 7th May in readiness for the new Antwerp-Cork link. The redeployment voyage to Antwerp from Italy took the ship via Portbury, Bristol, to deliver trade cars. The Eurocargo Bari made her first departure from Cork on 10th May.

P&O UPDATE

Nigel Lawrence

P&O Ferries' 28,138gt/1993-built Pride of Burgundy (above) left lay-up on the River Fal for drydocking down river at A&P Falmouth on 5th May.

Nigel Lawrence

The 20,296gt/1999-built Tilbury-Zeebrugge Ro-Ro ships Norsky and Norstream have been chartered to P&O Ferries since new by owners Bore Oy. However, both vessels now carry the Bore funnel colours in favour of P&O's. Bore also charters the 18.205gt/1999-built Estraden and 25,586gt/2011-built Bore Song (above) to P&O.

niferry.co.uk

On 11th May the 31,785gt/1987-built GNV Aries, ex-Pride of York, was already in full GNV livery at Genoa with sister Pride of Bruges still waiting for her turn. However, on 23rd May the now renamed GNV Antares was at an advanced stage of being repainted.

Darren Holdaway

The 20,646gt/2000-built European Causeway arrived at Harland & Wolff, Belfast, on 12th May for dry docking. The ship's place on the Cairnryan-Larne service was taken by the 17,464gt/1993-built Norbank (above), which had departed from her own refit on the Tyne two days earlier.

Herm Island has, in a surprise move, bought a new ferry to enhance links with St. Peter Port, Guernsey. Despite being served by the ever-popular and reliable Travel Trident ferry service, Herm has purchased the new vessel for £750,000 to provide "more flexibility" for residents and visitors. The 14m vessel will have capacity for 70 passengers. The island of Herm is owned by the States of Guernsey, which leases it for use as a tourism and hospitality destination. The ferry is being built in Canvey Island. It has been stressed that the newbuild is not intended to be a competitor to Travel Trident with the smaller vessel intended to "complement and work alongside" the Travel Trident ferry, running at different times. Naturally, the decision hasn't gone down well with many.

Isle of Man Steam Packet Company confirmed on 11th May that the 12,747gt/1998-built Ben-my-Chree would not return to service until the end of May. During her scheduled period in dry dock, detailed inspections of the vessel identified that specialist third-party work was necessary to repair stern tube bearings on the ship. The specialist contractors then indicated that the scope of work required would take longer than initially anticipated. So, whilst the ship resided at Birkenhead the 5,743gt/1998-built Manannan continued to operate daytime passenger services when the weather permitted whilst the 7,606gt/1998-built Arrow provided overnight freight services.

Merseytravel confirmed on 14th May that it is committed to securing the long-term future of the Mersey Ferries, despite market pressures curtailing its procurement process for brand new vessels. The existing ferries are almost 60 years old and in need of a revamp. The intention is to breathe new life into the existing fleet to secure their future for the next decade and beyond. The procurement process for newbuilds was paused in autumn 2019 as the bids received were higher than the funding available. This process was resumed before the second lockdown in August 2020 to test the market but unfortunately, prices have increased further, calling into question the affordability of the whole project. So, the project for new vessels is shelved for the time being. So, the 617gt/1959 built Snowdrop and 464gt/1960-built Royal Iris of the Mersey will be in frontline service for some time to come.

Moby filed a proposal for its subsidiary CIN (Tirrenia) on 24th May as no agreement was found with the judicial administrators of Tirrenia AS. CIN owes €180 million in a deferred unsecured debt payment for the acquisition of the former public company Tirrenia from the Italian state in 2012. The proposal includes a 20% minimum guaranteed recovery to its unsecured creditors, which could increase to 35%. To raise funds, five Tirrenia ships are to be sold, the High-speed vessel Isola di Capraia (€1.9m), Ro-Ro Beniamino Carnevale (€6.8m), Ro-Pax Bithia (€29.5m), Ro-Pax Janas (€29.5m) and Ro-Pax Athara (€32.5m).

Northlink Ferries' 11,720gt/2002-built Hrossey was forced to divert from Aberdeen to Scrabster on 5th May after suffering a fouled propeller in bad weather. The ship was en-route from Lerwick with the issue developing as the approach to Aberdeen had begun. The combination of the technical issue and adverse weather condition meant that a diversion was the only option. As a result, the ship did not get alongside in Scrabster Harbour until around 8pm that night. A team of divers then assessed the situation but that evening's return sailing to Shetland was cancelled.

Rederi AB Gotland is progressing with plans for a Nynashamn-Germany service. The German port has been suggested as Rostock with some sailings making an intermediate call at Visby. The 29,746gt/2003-built Drotten looks likely to open the service when it proceeds.

Sea Cargo's 12,251gt/1997-built SC Connector has seen instant operational results from her Norsepower tilting Rotor Sails after only a few months. Two of these 35m x 5m units were installed in January 2021 as the world's first installation of tiltable rotor sails, demonstrating that vessels which have to negotiate height restricted waterways can still benefit from this fuel and emissions-saving solution.

Seajets of Greece has been linked to the purchase of the 7,821gt/1974-built Al Salmy 4 (previously the Express Santorini/Chartres). The ship had been sold to Salem Al Makrani Cargo Co. in the United Arab Emirates in November 2016 having previously operated in the Azores on behalf of Portucalence Shipping following her career with Hellenic Seaways.

SIEM Industries expects the former Brittany Ferries newbuild Honfleur to be delivered in the third quarter of 2021. The intention is to sell the vessel or charter her out long-term as there appears to be good demand for ships of the Honfleur's specification. SIEM Industries acquired the ferry, which was rejected by Brittany Ferries after the long delays and the financial woes at the FSG Shipyard. The incomplete vessel was used as part of the settlement of SIEM's historic involvement with the yard. The 42,500gt/2021-built ship was subsequently towed to the Fosen Shipyard in Norway for completion.

LATEST DISPOSALS

Veterans that succumbed to the recycling beaches in May included the 7,564gt/1974-built Pray (better known as the Marine Evangeline/Spirit of Boulogne/Duke of Yorkshire) and the 10,870gt/1985-built Samsun at Aliaga in Turkey plus the 13,965gt/1991-built Searoad Tamar at Chittagong, Bangladesh. The latter had been purchased by Ainaftis in Greece but their need for the Ro-Ro ship appeared to change during the delivery voyage. No doubt the rising scrap values influenced the decision. Also, the 7,504gt/1973-built Birden (ex-Birdeniz N, Stena Scanrail) arrived for scrap on 12th May at the Gadani Demolition Yard, Pakistan.

StenaRoRo

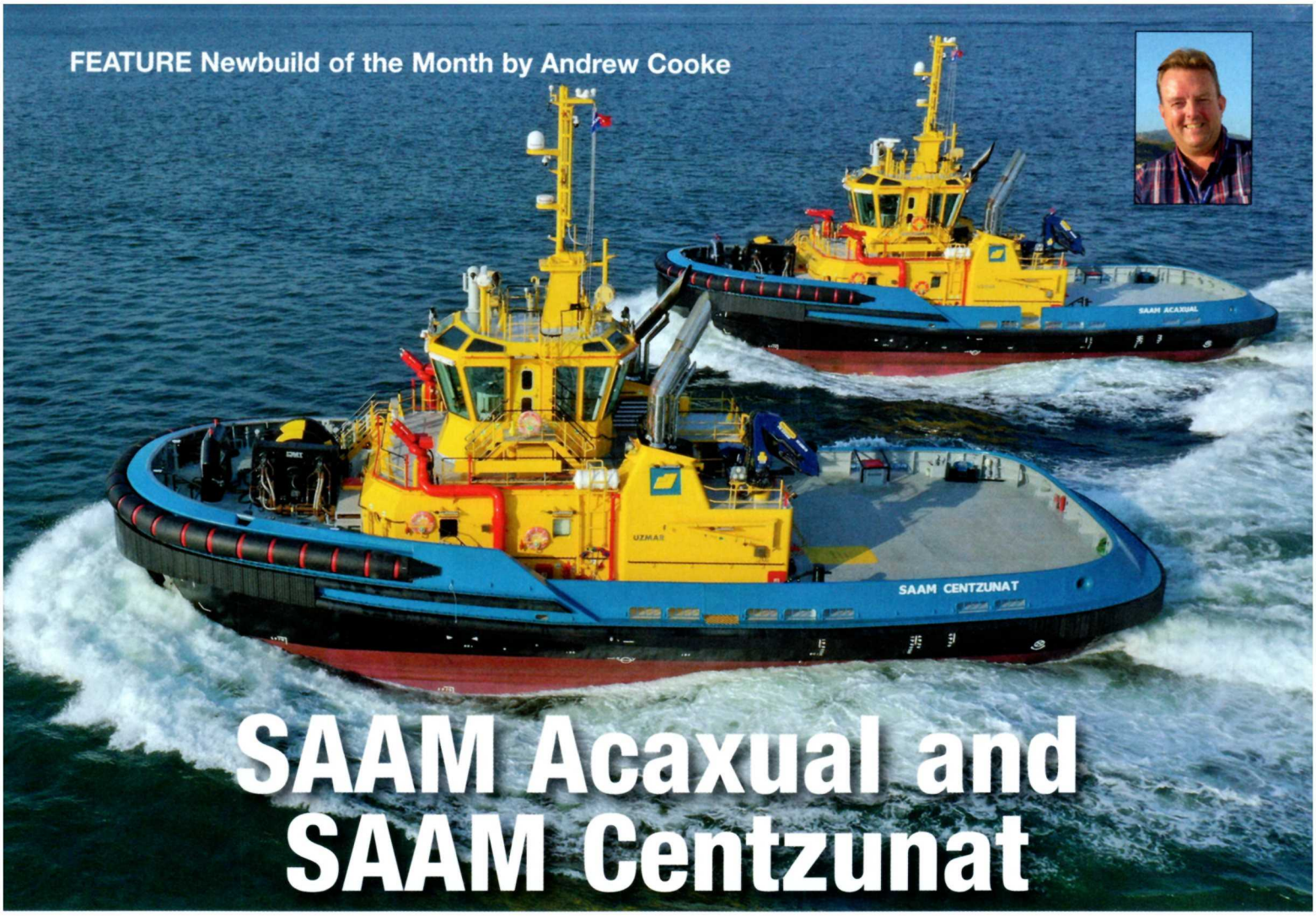
Stena Ro-Ro's latest and 5th E-Flexer, the 40,500gt/2021-built Côte d'Opale (above), was delivered to DFDS on 17th May, 6 weeks ahead of schedule by the Chinese shipyard CMI Jinling (Weihai). A ceremony with representatives from Stena Ro-Ro, DFDS and the shipyard was held on site and the ship then embarked upon her maiden voyage to Europe where she will enter service during the summer. Stena RoRo has signed a long-term charter agreement with DFDS, and the 214m long ship will become the longest on the Dover Straits. Brittany Ferries operates another E-Flexer, the Galicia. It seems likely that the Cote D'Opale will replace the last 'classic' ship at Dover, the much-travelled 28,833gt/1992-built Calais Seaways, which began her service life as the Prins Filip. She has since operated as the Stena Royal, P&OSL Aquitaine, PO Aquitaine, Pride of Aquitaine, Norman Spirit and Ostend Spirit.

Tallink Grupp has launched its 2021 summer cruises to nowhere and domestic cruises in Finland and Sweden, initially operating in June & July. They will be quarantine-free sailings on domestic routes and with no disembarking in neighbouring countries. The 58,376gt/1990-built Silja Serenade will operate 4th-22nd June from Helsinki to Tallinn on overnight cruises with no disembarking in Tallinn. After these dates the cruises will be operated by the Silja Europa from 23rd June onwards. The 59,912gt/1993-built Silja Europa will make a very unusual sight when she visits Falmouth, Cornwall for 10 days in June for use by police for accommodation during the G7 summit, hence the Silja Serenade undertaking the cruises initially.

Nigel Lawrence

Viking Line made the surprise announcement on 12th May that the 37,860gt/1985-built Mariella (above) had been sold to Corsica Ferries SAS and is to be renamed Mega Regina. The sale of the ship is part of a strengthening of the company's financial position. The total sales price was €19.6 million and was completed as a bareboat hire/purchase arrangement. The sale did not indicate any staff redundancies. The Mariella departed for Savona in the Mediterranean on 14th May after a Baltic career spanning 35 years. Her sister, the 37,583gt/1986-built Olympia, had departed the region for the UK in 1993 and became the Pride of Bilbao but returned to the Baltic for St. Peter Line as the SPL Princess Anastasia.

Virtu Ferries' new highspeed service between Malta and Catania (Sicilly) has been postponed due to the pandemic travel restrictions. The 8,045gt/2010-built Jean de la Valette was to have operated the Valletta-Augusta-Catania from early 2021 but, for the time being, the vessel will support the 9,044gt/2019-built Saint John Paul II this summer on Virtu Ferries' Malta-Pozzallo (Sicilly) service.



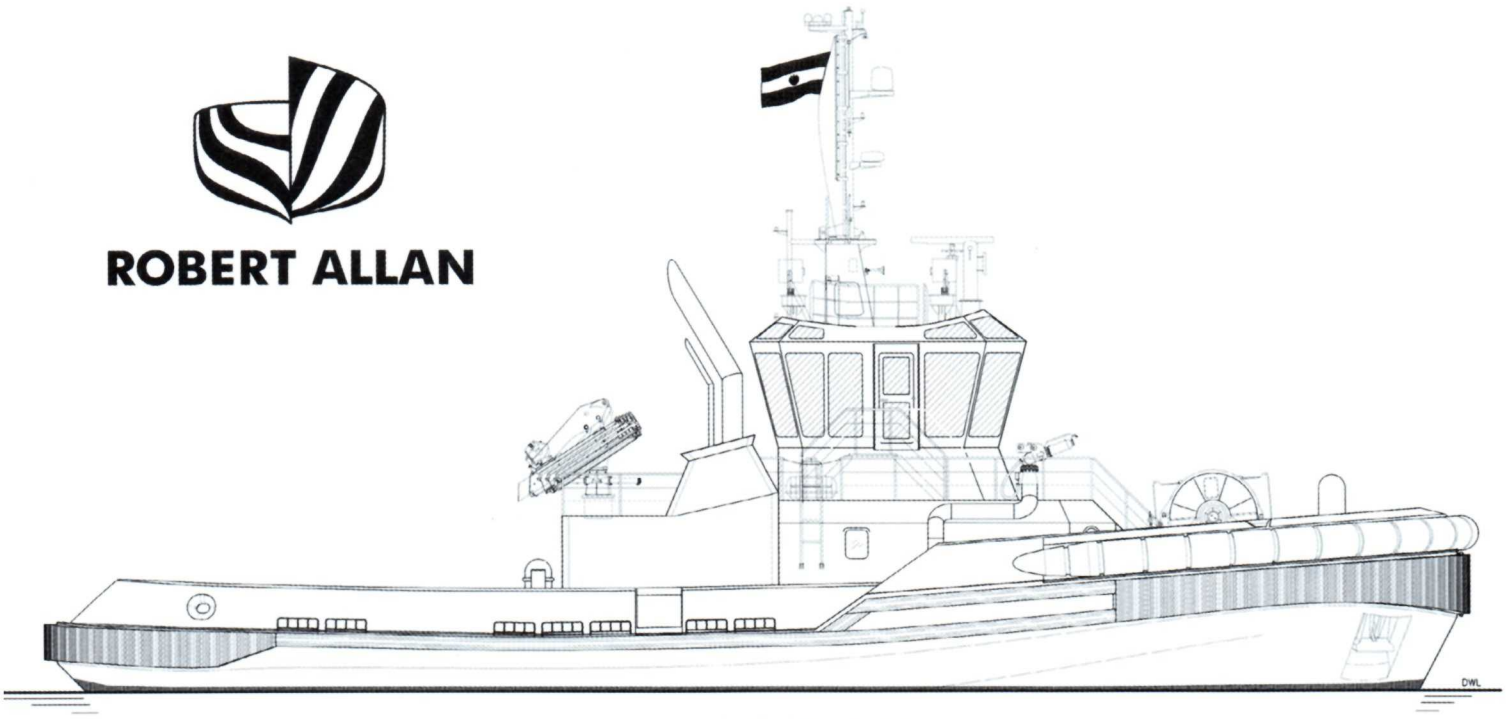
SAAM Acaxual and SAAM Centzunat

SAAM Towage (Sociedad Matriz SAAM) was founded in 1961 in Chile, South America, and has grown to become a major player in the towage industry across the Americas with operational bases in Brazil, Canada, Chile, Columba, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Uruguay. The company operates a fleet of over 170 tugs, 35 of which have been delivered in the past 7-8 years. SAAM has involvement with the marine sectors of towage, oil and gas, salvage assistance and special services (barges and civil construction). In 2014 SAAM commenced a joint operation with SMIT Boskalis before buying the latter's share of this operation five years later. The common trading name of SAAM Towage was launched on 30th October 2019, reflecting the adoption of a single common operating model, name and image for SAAM's nine towage operations. The company's growth continued with the acquisition of 70% of Intertug in 2021, entering the Colombian market, strengthening its position in the Caribbean and strengthening its regional leadership. In April 2021, SAAM Towage announced the launch of its operations in Peru and commenced operations in El Salvador, providing services to the Energía del Pacífico LNG terminal. This terminal supplies the new Acajutla LNG power station, a 378mW natural gas-fired power project constructed at the Port of Acajutla, Sonsonate, El Salvador. This is fuelled via a permanently moored floating storage and regasification unit (FSRU), an underground natural gas pipeline, a 44km-long 230kV transmission line, and three substations. Energía del Pacífico (EDP), a joint venture between the US-based power generation company Invenergy and the El Salvador-based Quantum Energy, is the owner and developer of the project. Estimated to cost £702 million, the Acajutla LNG power project represents the largest energy infrastructure investment in the history of El Salvador. Work began in 2019 with commissioning in 2021 and the site is one of the first LNG-fired power projects in Central America. Some Readers may be interested to learn that the new gas-fired power station consists of no fewer than 19 Wartsila 18V50SG/ 500rpm/18.3mW engines, each fitted with heat recovery boilers and a combined steam cycle system generating an additional 26mW using the exhaust gases from the engines. These power units are designed to operate with low-pressure gas, while the plant will be equipped with Wartsila's Dry Flexicycle technology to avoid the use of cooling water. The entire facility will increase the electricity production capacity of El Salvador by 23% and help reduce the country's dependence on diesel and heavy fuel oil for power generation. The LNG is delivered to Acajutla via 165,000m^3 capacity gas carriers 32 times per year, which will be transferred to the aforementioned 174,000m^3 FSRU for storage and re-gasification.

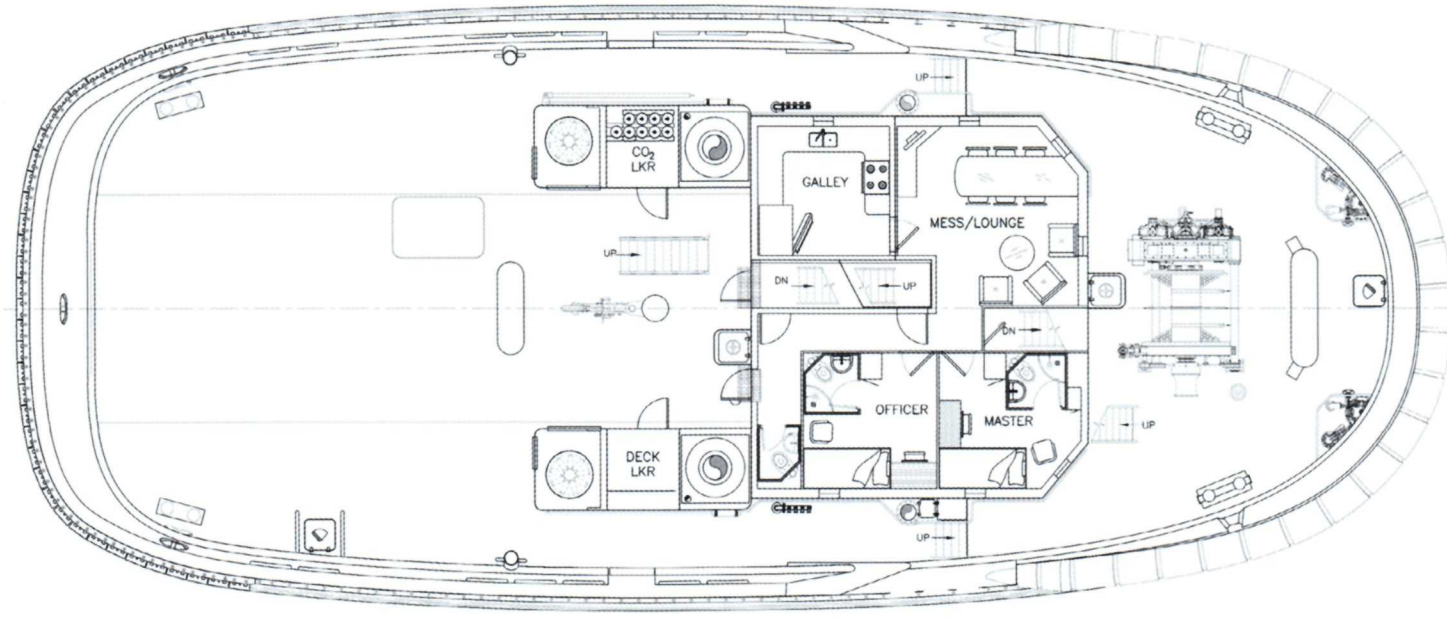
NEWBUILDS FOR NEW VENTURE

The towage duties for the Energía del Pacífico at Acajutla were awarded to SAAM Towage El Salvador S.A. with orders for two newbuild tugs being signed on 31st January 2020 with UZMAR Shipyard at Kocaeli Free Zone, near Istanbul, Turkey. UZMAR was founded in 1972 by Senior Harbour Pilot Captain Altay Altug as a pilotage and towage company and, almost 50 years later, the company provides pilotage, towage, salvage and emergency response duties at Nemrut Port, Izmit, Akcansa Port Canakkale. Ambarli Port, Istanbul and Iskenderun Port, Hatay. UZMAR has its own fleet of vessels, totalling 29 at the time of writing. In 1993 UZMAR started to build tugs for its own fleet requirements and later for the international market using the modern designs of Robert Allan Ltd. in Canada. The present modern-day facilities were established in 2005. In 49 years, the company has evolved from being the first private pilotage and towage operator in Turkey to a world-class shipbuilder, with over 200 vessels for 22 countries in 6 continents built thus far. The new vessels ordered by SAAM are 32m long ASD RAstar 3200W Class Escort Tugs designed by Robert Allan. This azimuth stern drive (ASD) class of tug was specially designed to meet the requirements of offshore operations with a bollard pull in excess of 75 tonnes and an operating speed of over 12.5 knots. The Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) analysis of the RAstar 3200W design tug has been completed by Robert Allan Ltd. so

ROBERT ALLAN



OUTBOARD PROFILE



MAIN DECK

as to supply immense steering and braking forces when the vessels are on escort operations.

UZMAR had previously delivered a RAstar 3200W design to SAAM Towage Canada Inc. in early 2019 named SAAM Tsimshian Warrior (498gt/built 2019). This was the first IMO Tier III certified tug for Canada and she works at the AltaGas Terminal. The very first RAstar 3200 tug was delivered in February 2009 in the form of the 495gt/2009-built Monterrey for Servicios Marítimos de Baja California, S. de R.L de C.V. of Mexico. She was built by Union Naval Valencia (UNV) of Valencia, Spain with the operating company being a joint venture between Moran Towing of the USA and Grupo Boluda of Spain. The tug was the first of 4 expressly designed to work at the Costa Azul LNG terminal on the north-west coast of Mexico, a terminal exposed to fully developed Pacific swells. The basic requirements for the tug design stipulated that the tug and winch must be able to sustain a line pull of 75 tonnes throughout the entire terminal approach in a 2m plus significant swell. The RAstar 3200 Class produces tugs of under 500gt with a minimum bollard pull of 75 tonnes. In order to cope with the predominant sea conditions on Escort Tug duties, Robert Allan Ltd. chose to utilise the then new RAstar hull form for the best sea-keeping. The gross tonnage constraint of 500gt forced some minor modifications to the 3200 Class concept, and also required a shortening of the forecastle. The basic hull form reflects the double chine form that characterises all Robert Allan Ltd. designs, with a sweeping chined stern. A large escort skeg is fitted forward which, in conjunction with the sponsoned hull shape, enhances the indirect towing capability and provides much enhanced roll stability. On trials the Monterrey performed exceptionally well, achieving a mean bollard pull of 82.5 tonnes and a free-running speed of 14 knots.

SPEEDY DELIVERY

The two tugs destined for El Salvador had their keels laid on 6th April and 15th May 2020 respectively, were launched on 10th November and 11th December 2020 with delivery being instigated on 9th March 2021. The duo was placed into the hands of Dutch company Redwise Maritime BV, an outfit that specialises in delivering newbuilds around the globe from shipyard to Owner/Operator. The tugs departed from the port of Izmit (Turkey) on 12th March and, on 21st April, the arrival of the vessels at the Port of Acajutla was announced following a 40-day voyage across the Atlantic Ocean and through the Panama Canal.

The tugs carry the names SAAM Acaxual and SAAM Centzunat, names from the native language Nahuatl in El Salvador, meaning Acajutla and Sonsonate (the region where the port is, meaning Big River/Four hundred waters).

These robust 32m long RAstar 3200W tugs have a 13.20m beam, a hull depth of 5.50m, a draught of 6.20m, a deadweight of 315 tonnes and a maximum displacement of 950 tonnes. Each vessel's deckhouse has been outfitted to the highest standards for a crew of 5-7. The main deck features generous en-suite cabins for the Master and Chief Engineer, both with en-suite facilities, and a spacious crew mess/lounge, served by a fully equipped galley. The lower deck contains three en-suite crew cabins, two of which are equipped for double occupancy. The remainder of the lower deck space is dedicated to stores spaces, the laundry, HVAC and Switchboard rooms. The wheelhouse is designed for maximum visibility with a single control station providing maximum visibility to both fore and aft deck working areas. Low noise levels throughout the accommodation and control spaces of the tug are achieved by utilising advanced methods of isolating main propulsion machinery, as well as high-grade insulation and floating floor techniques. B

Beneath the Lower Deck are fuel and fresh water tanks plus the domestic/auxiliary machinery space. Midships in the hull is where the "business end" of the tugs can be found. Power is provided by two Caterpillar 3516C V-16, 4-Stroke Water-Cooled Diesel engines. These robust units have a 170mm bore, a 215mm stroke and a compression ratio of 14.7:1.

Engine output per unit is 2,350kW (3,150bhp) @ 1800 rpm and each 3516C drives a Kongsberg (formerly Rolls Royce) US 255S P30 fixed pitch azimuthing Z-drive propeller with a diameter of 2,800mm. The 255S propeller units have a maximum output power of 2,600kW, an input power range of 750-1,800rpm, a stem length from the hull of 3,600-3,800mm and weigh 25-30 tonnes. A free-running service speed is provided and, with a bollard pull of 81 tonnes, these tugs can work under dynamic traction loads of more than 135 tonnes at a speed of 10 knots. The design steering force at 10 knots is 86 tonnes and the design braking force at 10 knots is 129 tonnes. The electrical power on board is supplied via a pair of Caterpillar C7.1 ship service generator sets, 118ekW @ 60 Hz each plus one Caterpillar C4.4 harbour generator set, 44 ekW @ 60 Hz. Firefighting capability is a Fi-Fi 1 class system with water spray, supplied by Marsis, featuring two 1,200m3/hr water monitors with foam capability (300 m^3/hr). The system is supplied via a 2,750m^3/hr pump driven by a dedicated CAT C32 engine, 1,193 kW @ 1800 rpm. Specific safety features onboard include a remotely operated gas detection and automatic isolation system, plus deck equipment and machinery with explosive atmosphere certification (ATEX).

Deck machinery on the SAAM Acaxual and SAAM Centzunat includes an escort (bow) winch (hydraulic), DMT model RRW-H800kN, 800 kN @ 0-10m/min pull, 2700 kN brake, spooled with 2 x 220m of 72mm synthetic line over 7 layers, ATEX Zone 2 rated plus two vertical windlasses (hydraulic), DMT model ACH-22K2, ATEX Zone 2 rated and a towing hook with quick release, Data Hidrolik model DTH 90-135P. A Palfinger PK23500(M)A folding knuckle boom crane, 1.85t SWL @ 8m outreach, is fitted on the port side aft of the superstructure for general purpose use. The aft deck provides a clean and spacious working area.

ONWARDS AND UPWARDS

SAAM Towage admitted that completing these sister vessels was an enormous challenge due to the complications presented by the pandemic, but each hurdle was navigated and the project remained on schedule. The arrival of the RAstar 3200W newbuilds in April coincided with SAAM Towage commencing a new operation in Peru. To undertake this, a tug was redeployed to the Port of Callao with a second being delivered in the form of the 312gt/2021-built Albatros from Sanmar Shipyards in Turkey. Built as the Bogacay XLII, the Albatros is a 24.4m long Robert Allan RAmparts 2400SX design workhorse with a beam of 11.25m. She is powered by two 2,100kW main engines, providing a running speed of 13 knots and 70 tonnes of bollard pull. Fire-fighting equipment is also fitted, driven through a clutched flexible coupling in front of the port side main engine, with capacity to deliver 2,700m^3/hr of water and foam. Earlier in 2021 SAAM Towage also expanded services in Ecuador with two more tugs built to handle larger ships. The first of these, the Ramparts 2500W design SAAM Tarqui (365gt/built 2016), arrived at the port of Guayaquil on 26th January after her long voyage from Med Marine, Turkey. This example was previously known as the Efesan Port, and was later joined by another tug from Mexico.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Designer:	Robert Allan Ltd, Canada
Builder:	UZMAR
Location:	Kocaeli Free Zone, Izmit, near Istanbul, Turkey
Owner/Operator:	SAAM Towage El Salvador SA, Panama City, Panama
Keel Laid:	6th April 2020/ 15th May 2020
Launched:	10th November 2020 and 11th December 2020
Delivered:	9th March 2021 (Departed Izmit 12th March)
IMO:	9898539 and 9898541
Classification:	Bureau Veritas with the following notation:
	BV 1 Hull, Mach, Escort Tug, Fire-Fighting 1 Water spraying, AUT-UMS, In Water Survey
Length overall:	32.0m
Beam:	13.20m
Depth:	5.50m
Draught (Max):	6.20m
Summer Deadweight:	315t
Gross Tonnage:	498
Maximum displacement:	950t
Free-running speed:	13.5 knots
Bollard pull:	81 tonnes
Steering force at 10 kts:	86 tonnes
Braking force at 10 kts:	129 tonnes
Main Engines:	2 x Caterpillar 3516C main engines, each 2350 kW @ 1800 rpm
Propulsion:	2 x Kongsberg US 255 P30 FP azimuthing z-drives, 4 blades, 2800mm diameter
Electrical:	2 x Caterpillar C7.1 ship service gensets, each 118 ekW @ 60 Hz
	1 x Caterpillar C4.4 harbour genset, 44 ekW @ 60 Hz
Fire Fighting:	Fi-Fi 1 class system with water spray, supplied by Marsis, 2 x 1,200m^3/hr water monitors with foam capability (300 m^3/hr)
	2,750 m^3/hr pump driven by dedicated CAT C32 engine, 1193 kW @ 1800 rpm
TANK CAPACITIES	
Fuel:	205m^3
Fresh water:	40m^3
Foam:	11m^3
Complement:	5-7 crew

Special thanks must go to Ernst Schneider, CGD, Graphic Designer at Robert Allan Ltd for his invaluable assistance with information and images.

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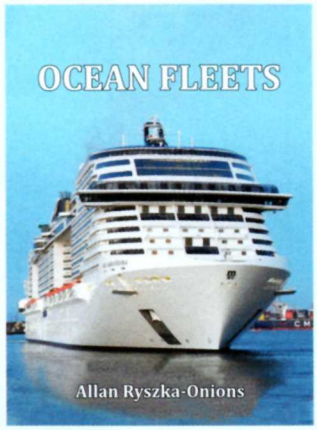

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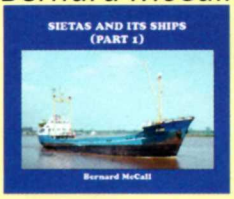

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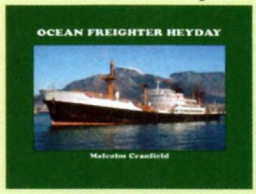

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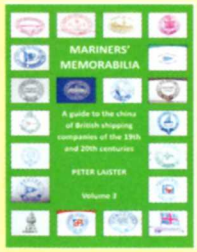

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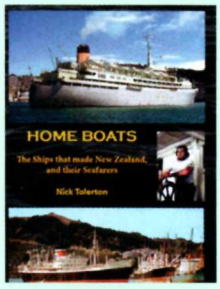

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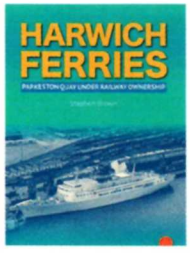

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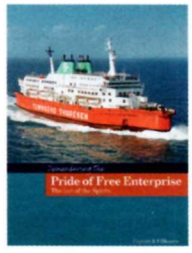

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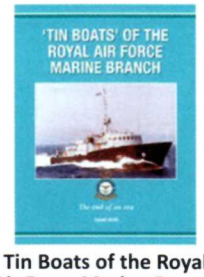

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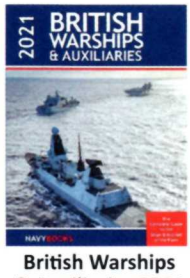

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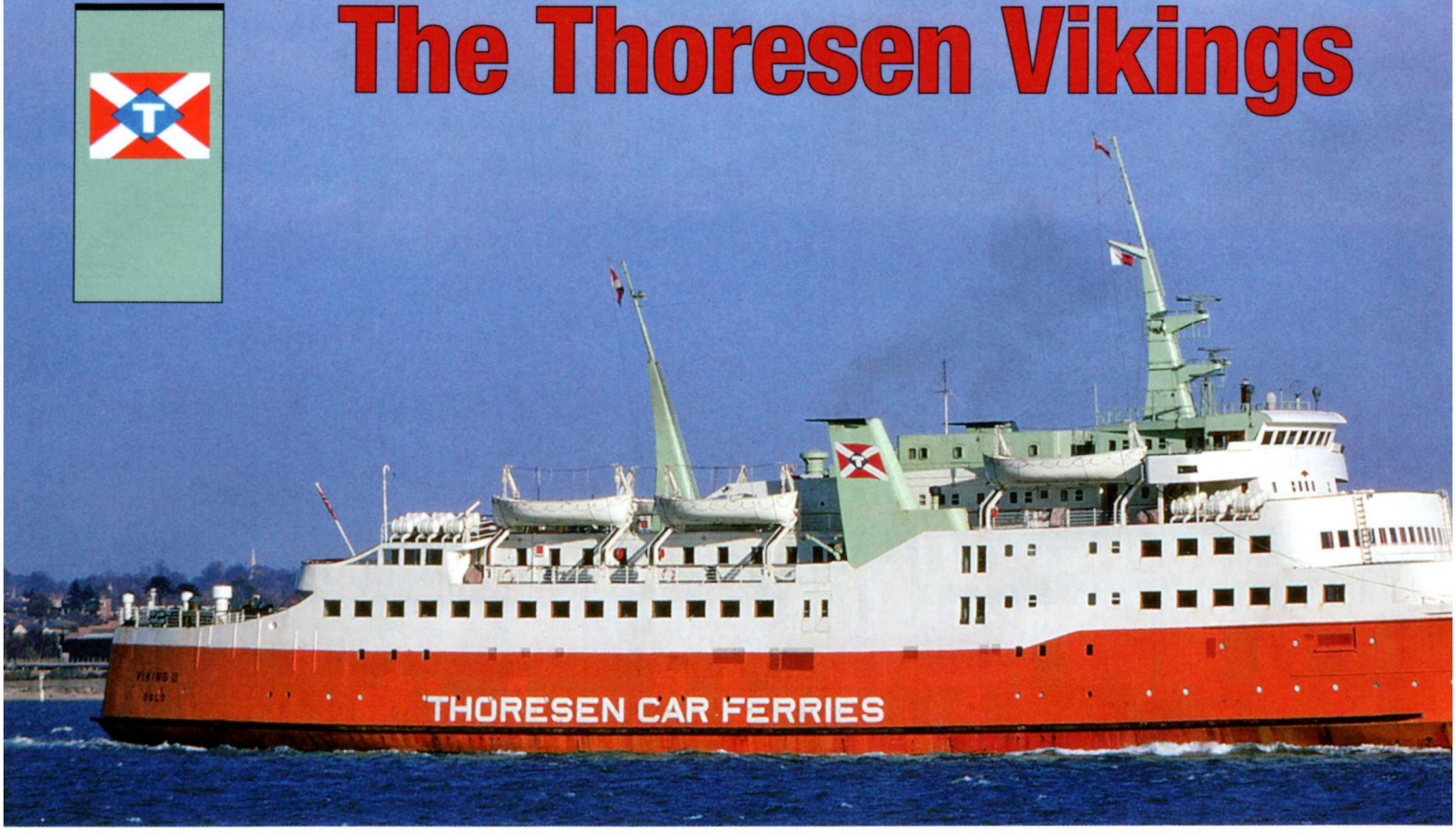
The Thoresen Vikings



What did Richard Branson and Otto Thoresen have in common? It certainly wasn't a mane of hair (at the time Otto was virtually bald) or the beard (the Norwegian was, to my knowledge, always clean shaven). What links these two transport entrepreneurs was a common epiphany, that when faced with yet another mediocre journey on what they considered to be an over-priced, substandard rival, they decided to enter the fray with their own revolutionary products. For Branson it was Virgin Atlantic Airways which first flew to the USA in 1984. Twenty years earlier Thoresen Car Ferries was born.

Otto Thoresen had worked for a number of years as manager of Fred. Olsen's Mediterranean operation, garnering experience in the freight and ferry business. During that time he had become increasingly frustrated at the amount of inactive time ships under his tenure spent between voyages and the time-consuming, arcane freight handling methods employed at each port. He was convinced that he could provide a more efficient and profitable service, utilising a roll-on roll-off freight containerisation system. He also felt that this could operate in tandem with a more streamlined method of transporting passengers and cars.

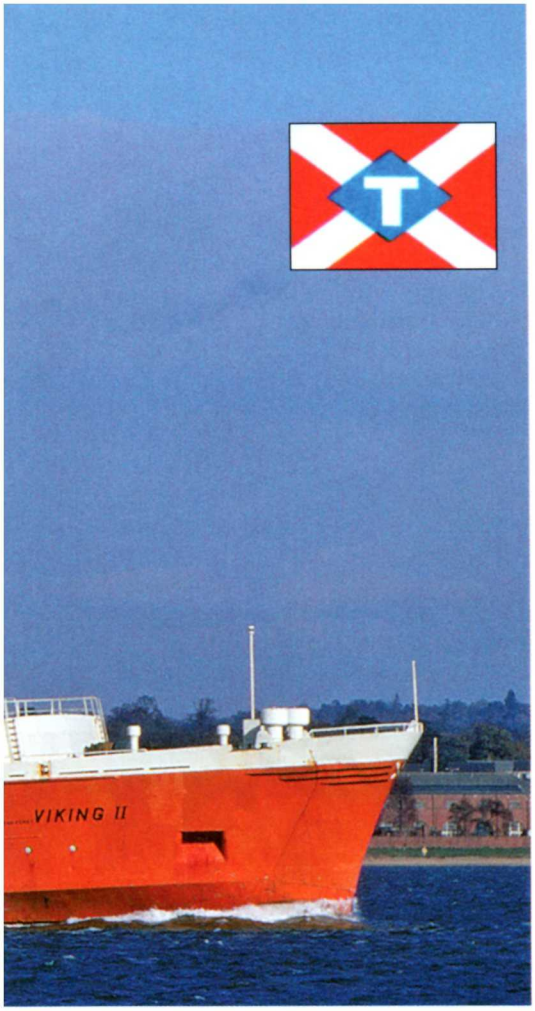
The epiphany referred to above came on a bleak winter crossing sometime in the late 1950s. Having been diverted from Dunkirk and soldiering on despite a heavy cold (which prevented him from flying), Thoresen and his wife embarked on one of the ageing 'mail steamers' at Dieppe, possibly the Brighton. Feeling unwell and delayed for his meeting in London, Thoresen was not a happy man. He is quoted in Miles Cowsill and John Hendy's book Remembering the Thoresen Vikings, as saying 'We were served an indifferent breakfast on a tablecloth full of tea-spots. My wife tells me that I banged my fist on the table and said "You needn't be a genius to do better than this".' Possibly not but it did require foresight, perseverance, considerable investment and an element of good fortune.

Thoresen knew that the success of his idea required a high frequency, mass movement route. The English Channel was the obvious choice but had been monopolised by the British and French railway companies for over a century, government purse strings and 'public service' considerations almost certainly stifling innovation. Nevertheless by the turn of the decade the rail companies were introducing new vessels with modern interiors, such as the Maid of Kent, but also reviewing their position and concentrating this new tonnage on their most profitable Dover Straits services. Thoresen correctly guessed that with increased private car ownership, the travelling public might also want Western Channel services that avoided the (pre-M25) London bottleneck. Jung's theory of 'synchronicity' now played its part, meaningful coincidences evolving to fulfil the Norwegian's plan.

British Railways (BR) shifted their Channel Island services to Weymouth, whilst further cutbacks to their loss making Le Havre overnight service in 1958 were a further clear indication of retrenchment. Thoresen decided to strike and enlisted the crucial assistance of London shipbrokers James Burness & Sons Ltd., who began to sound out Southampton, Weymouth and Cherbourg about a proposed cross-channel car ferry service. Cherbourg had long been bypassed in favour of Le Havre (for Paris) and to a lesser extent St. Malo (for Brittany) as a ferry port on the French side of the Channel. With its historic role as a staging post for transatlantic liners also under threat the local authorities were very receptive to the proposed new service. On the English side, Southampton was still smarting from BR's decision to reposition its Channel Island service to Weymouth (in May 1961 the Isle of Guernsey made the final passenger ferry crossing from the Hampshire port to the islands) and persistent rumours that it would soon pull out of the Le Havre route altogether. For its part Weymouth's star was on the rise having secured the Channel Island traffic.

So it was that the various parties came together and in January 1963 it was made public that a Norwegian group, with British and French investors, were planning the new service from Southampton to Cherbourg. Southampton had been selected over its Dorset rival on the basis of guaranteeing provision of the necessary facilities by the 1964 inception date. Ironically they intended to use the berth vacated by the Channel Island ferries. Seeds had been sown.

With agreements for the development of port facilities now in place, all the



Left: The 3,670grt Viking II in Thoresen's original livery leaving Southampton in November 1971.
Above: The Viking I leaving Southampton in June 1974 in the new livery of Townsend Thoresen.
Below: The Viking II as Sealink's Earl William seen leaving Guernsey in April 1978. In April 2011 she sank after the tug towing her to the breakers collided with a drilling rig.
Bottom: The 3,824grt Viking III arriving at Southampton in June 1973. After various roles in the Baltic she still survives as Red Star 1. She has recently been sold to Neytas Marine of the Ukraine.
(All photos by Don Smith/photo-transport.com)

'Southampton-Cherbourg Car Ferry Service' of Otto Thoresen Shipping Co. A/S needed was a ship. In April 1963 it was announced that shipyards throughout Europe had been invited to tender for the first vessel and on the 15th of the month a communiqué confirmed that Kaldnes Mek Verksted A/S, at Tonsberg in Norway, had been selected, based on price, delivery date and credit provision considerations. The actual cost would be £1.2 million, £300,000 less than initially projected. In order to design the new vessel Thoresen turned to the most prolific, cutting edge, ferry design company in the world, Knud E Hansen A/S (KEH) of Denmark.

In the early 1960s the KEH drawing office was a hotbed of creativity, where three eminent naval architects of very diverse personalities. Tage Wandborg, Dag Rogne and Poul Erik Rasmussen were particularly prominent. Whilst Rasmussen concentrated on the underwater elements, Wandborg and Rogne were engaged in an increasingly competitive battle, especially from Wandborg's viewpoint, over how best to develop the hull and upper works. Wandborg, a flamboyant extrovert was and remained a great aesthete for whom balance and beauty were as significant as practicality. He would spend considerable time developing and refining a ship's look, including the livery. In contrast Rogne, more quiet and reserved by nature, was a pragmatist, believing that the designer's role was to interpret the client's requirements and meet these stipulations in the shortest possible time and at the least possible cost. In the

Above: The Viking III as the 5,762gt Red Star 1 of Northbay Transport Maritimos. She is seen here at Zakinthos in August 2017. *(Carsten Dettmer)*

Below: The 1,152grt Viking IV leaving Southampton in June 1977. *(Don Smith/photo-transport.com)*

Bottom: The Viking IV as the livestock Guernsey Express arriving at Contrecoeur, Québec in September 1989. She was coverted into a livestock carrier in 1981. On 9th November 1996 she sank 32nm off Guam after taking on water during Typhoon Dale. She was on route from Brisbane to Osaka with a cargo of cattle. All the crew were rescued. *(Rene Beauchamp)*

late 1950s a fusion of their philosophies created a general design that would dominate the ferry industry over the forthcoming decade and beyond. It was first manifested in Juelsminde-Kalundborg Linien's 2,301 grt Julie and Kalle of 1962 and 1963. These twins provided a blueprint for Thoresen Shipping's new order.

Once the design was finalised further details of both the intended service and the ships (plural) emerged. On the strength of early bookings and confirmation of BR's withdrawal from the Le Havre service, Thoresen had placed an order for a second, identical sister ship on 19th September 1963. Six days later shareholders were appraised of the specifications of the ships, how they were to be funded (an 80% credit had been arranged repayable over eight years) and a timetable. In November 1963 it emerged that the new ferry terminals at Southampton and Cherbourg were already under construction and the first ship was due to be delivered on 2nd April 1964, inaugurating the service on 11th May.

The pace of construction was impressive. Having laid the keel in October 1963 Viking I was launched by Mrs. Thoresen into the icy waters of Oslofjord just four and a half months later, on 31st January 1964. In fact the name had to be formally amended to 'Car ferry Viking I' on instruction from the Norwegian Shipping authorities. It transpired there was already a Viking I on the national register. Later than initially predicted she was finally delivered on 29th April 1964, the following day Viking II was launched. Well aware of the publicity value Thoresen had construed a special naming ceremony, involving not one but three 'Godmothers'. Selected by their respective cities, students Kay Hollingsworth (Southampton), Francoise Ninn (Cherbourg) and Marie Helene Grosos (Le Havre) not only named the ship but also attended a lunch and party on board Viking I before joining that ship's delivery voyage to Cherbourg, where she arrived on Saturday 2nd May. The following morning she moored alongside berth number 7 at Southampton, part of the £200,000 redevelopment of the port's Outer Dock.

The new ferry caused a sensation. Not only was she the first vessel on the English Channel to feature bow and stern loading doors, thereby introducing the Roll-on Roll-off concept to the market but Wandborg's styling gave her a stylish, modern profile, radically different from the 'mini-liner' look of contemporary BR ferries. Emphasising just how different this new project was the ship also introduced the company's visually startling livery. Publicised as a safety feature the orange hull, white lower superstructure and green upper works, funnel and masts was a stark contrast to the staid railway steamers. Adding the company name along each flank was similarly inspired. Of course the new

look wasn't universally admired and traditionalists considered it all rather gaudy, but safety feature or not it certainly set the new ferries and service apart. Wandborg's touch was evident everywhere, including the swept back stacks on each flank capped by extended fins, which in tandem with the raked masts and neatly tiered decks conveyed a sense of speed and modernity.

At 3,671 grt, with a length overall of 99.50m (326ft 5in) and a beam of 18.32m (76ft 1in) she was the largest KEH ferry designed to date. In order to aid stability there was extensive use of aluminium, including the upper deckhouse and masts. Viking I and her two subsequent sisters were powered by a pair of oil fired Pielstick 12 cylinder engines, built by the Swedish company AB Lindholmens at Varv Gothenburg. Generating 10,200 bhp these achieved 20.5 knots on trials, a full knot faster than specified in the contract and easily capable of providing an 18.5 knot service speed. Perhaps even more impressively the ship could be taken from full-speed to stationery in barely over a minute and within three ship lengths. Auxiliary machinery included a powerful 600hp bow thruster that provided six tons of lateral thrust to manoeuvre on and off the link spans at Southampton and Cherbourg. The hull was especially ice strengthened with a view to potential winter charters in the Baltic.

As previously mentioned Viking I was the first Ro-Ro vessel on the English Channel, with vehicles being driven on via a stern ramp in Southampton and off via a forward ramp in Cherbourg. The ramp was concealed behind the forward bow door which was hinged at the top and raised hydraulically. For the return journey the pattern was reversed. Although there was only a single vehicle access lane on the link span and ramp, the main car deck offered a broad spread of eleven lanes, made possible by the exhausts running up each flank. Augmenting the main deck were versatile hinged platforms which could carry up to 50 cars once raised, or be tucked away flush with the hull sides when the lower lanes were carrying commercial vehicles. Speed was of the essence when it came to loading and unloading the ferry and it was estimated that the entire complement of 180 cars could be unloaded in just 13 minutes. To Otto Thoresen's doubtless delight it would be possible to turn the ships around in just one hour.

One of the company's main goals was to provide a fresh alternative to the rather tired, conservative accommodation offered by the incumbent railway ships. Utilising light and bright veneers, vibrant fabrics and modern synthetic materials, the passenger spaces on Viking I introduced paired back, clean Scandinavian style to the English and continental travelling public. It proved enduringly popular.

There were three passenger decks above the vehicle space with the full length Promenade Deck the most prominent. Furthest forward was the 190 seat saloon, incorporating 'The Smuggler's Cave Bar' and the 'Smorgasbord' Buffet' during summer daytime crossings, where it was possible to eat as much as one liked for 15 shillings. This exotic touch of Scandinavian cuisine proved very popular and a source of many family and group competitive eating contests. Aft of the saloon was a large central lobby, housing the main staircases and access to the two passenger lifts on each beam. This was also the embarkation point for foot passengers, with shell doors for gangway access and included shops and toilet facilities. Directly aft of the lobby, on each flank, were the main lounges offering seating and 'sleeperette' recliners for just shy of 180 passengers. Down the centre line were two banks of four berth cabins, with other cabin accommodation being situated in the forward portion of 'tween deck space below the main vehicle deck. Aft on Promenade Deck was a forty seat lounge area with aft facing windows. From here doors opened onto a small open passenger space adjacent to the cordoned off mooring deck.

If we return to the lobby and head up the forward facing main flight of stairs to Boat Deck, passengers encountered another hallway, offset to starboard. Straight ahead, with 180 degree views out over the bow and each side was the popular cafeteria, whilst aft to starboard was 'Le Commandant' à la carte restaurant. The accompanying galley, crew and officer messes were positioned on the port side. From the hallway, outer deck space was accessed via a door on the starboard side. Heading aft from here was an outdoor promenade under two lifeboats leading to a sheltered sun deck. With glazed panels cut into the rear bulwark allowing seated passengers views of the wake beyond, it was a pleasant spot to while away the hours, weather permitting. Heading around to the portside flank was more promenade deck space located under a further pair of lifeboats. At the point where the funnel casings rose up were steps on each side rising to the forward outer deck space on what was confusingly named Bridge Deck. Common at the time, the outdoor promenade on Bridge Deck flanks continued forward, under a single lifeboat to a forward facing observation vantage point, which was particularly popular for port arrivals and departures. The walkway surrounded the Captain, Chief engineer and officers' quarters and extended aft via a narrow causeway to the expansive sun deck. This was a favourite sheltered place for passengers on balmy summer crossings, the company's promotional film showed it crammed with snoozing passengers, relaxing and sunbathing in vibrant hued, striped deck chairs. A short flight of stairs on each side of Bridge Deck gave access to the rather more appropriately named 'Upper Bridge Deck'. With the wheelhouse, chart and communications rooms this was the summit of the ship, flanked by the bridge wings and topped only by the raked radar mast.

Three 'practice runs' were undertaken, starting on 4th May 1964, in which seventy cars and drivers armed with full documentation passed through the full embarkation process, from checking in to driving on board. The trial also tested the new 130ft long links pan and its 10ft wide traffic lane. On 5th and 6th May the press were taken on cruises in the Solent and to Cherbourg respectively, returning with nothing but praise about the ship and the company. If it all seemed too good to be true, teething gremlins were unfortunately about to strike. The port engine was found to be running dangerously hot on the return from France, delaying the arrival back in Southampton. Swedish engineers tried but failed to rectify the fault until spare parts could be sourced and supplied, necessitating a postponement of the revised maiden sailing (7th May) until its original advertised date. Under leaden skies and with crewmen sprucing up the paintwork there was a ceremonial opening of the linkspan by the Mayor of Southampton on 11th May 1964, before one hundred and seventy cars drove on board. The flag-bedecked Viking I eased away from her berth at 1030 for a maiden five hour crossing to Cherbourg.

Viking I quickly gained an excellent reputation. Like so many ships the amenities and décor might have been impressive and the lower prices a definite incentive but it was the crew that really helped to make the difference. It's an undoubted generalisation but their enthusiasm and good cheer made a refreshing change. Perhaps remembering that initial epiphany Thoresen lent great weight to keeping his crews and shore side staff content and an example of the company's egalitarian approach was when management periodically served tables in the crew mess. The contrast between Thoresen and BR passenger and vehicle numbers was remarkable. Within three weeks the new venture had carried more cars than their predecessors had in the whole of 1962 (3,500 compared to 2,642). Passenger numbers were equally impressive with 13,000 making the crossing in less than a month.

Largely unheralded Viking II entered service with a 19th July 1964 sailing to Cherbourg, allowing Viking I to inaugurate the Le Havre service the following day. That same month an order was placed for a third ship, the successful tender going to Orenstein-Koppel und Lubecker Masch A/G in West Germany. Barely two months after starting the service and with very healthy forward bookings Thoresen felt the third ship would consolidate their position in light of increasing demand and provide greater flexibility in terms of routes and timetables.

Above: The 6,387grt Viking Voyager off Felixstowe in October 1978. *(Don Smith/photo-transport.com)*
Below: After a spell with P&O as Pride of Cherbourg, then Pride of Cherbourg II the former Viking Voyager joined Fred. Olsen in 1994, initially as Banaderos, then from 2000 as Barlovento as seen below. In 2005 she moved to SAOS ANES as Samothraki then on 22nd July 2011 she arrived at Aliaga to be broken up by Avsar GS. *(Norman Middlemiss)*
Bottom: The 6,386grt Viking Valiant leaving Southampton in June 1977. In 1989 she joined P&O Ferries as Pride of Le Havre but was renamed Pride of Cherbourg in 1994 when the new Pride of Le Havre came into service. *(Don Smith/photo-transport.com)*

The first two ships were structurally identical, the only differences being a smaller pair of radar scanners on Viking I's forward mast (she would subsequently have a larger unit installed above the bridge) and a short mast on the second ship's f'c'sle. Early on it was easy to differentiate the sisters by their hull livery, initially there was a much deeper mid-ships 'drop' in the orange hull of Viking I. Viking II's less significant differential gave the ship a more harmonious appearance and the same scheme was therefore adopted by Viking I at the first dry-docking.

Although there was one early mishap when Viking I dealt a glancing blow to BR's Elk whilst leaving Outer Dock on 7th September 1964 and sustained slight damage, the new services settled into a happily unremarkable rhythm. Early daily Cherbourg sailings departing Southampton at 1030 and returning from France at 1630 were supplemented by overnight sailings from 15th May through into July. Departures from Southampton at 2230 on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturdays and Cherbourg at the same time on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday necessitated a subsequent shift of the 1030 and 1630 day sailings between the two ports on each subsequent day. Confusing? Yes, it most certainly was.

A more straightforward 'peak season' timetable was introduced from 20th July through to 27th September 1964, with the introduction of Viking II allowing daily departures from Southampton at 1030 and 1630 and corresponding sailings from Cherbourg at 1630 and 2230. A single daily Le Havre sailing left England at 2230 each evening and returned from the mouth of the Seine at 0930 the following day. At the end of that first, highly successful summer season Thoresen dispensed with the services of James Burness & Sons Ltd. and took over complete control of the ships and their services. Seeking to increase its profile amongst the UK travelling public they planned a quite unique publicity exercise, to run in conjunction with a concerted TV and newspaper advertising campaign. Initially earmarked for Viking I (eventually Viking II was used) the company decided to send the ferry on a 1,100 mile tour of the UK, concentrating on the regional market, away from the South East. Starting at Liverpool (27th-28th October), where over 10,000 members of the public came aboard at the Pier Head, in the shadow of the Liver building, the ferry sailed south under the watchful eye of Captain Gaiever, to Avonmouth (29th-30th October) and Southampton (31st October to 1st November), then up the east coast to Hull (3rd-4th November) and Newcastle (6th-7th November) culminating at Leith (9th-10th November). Harnessing the creativity within the marketing team, Viking II's car deck was transformed into a mix of film-set and dance venue. A special dance floor was laid over the

utilitarian steel car lanes whilst bulkheads were adorned with suitable props from the recently completed 'The Long Ships' movie, starring Sidney Poitier and Richard Widmark. The piéce de rèsistance and focal point for all the festivities was a 19ft long boat replica from the film, serving as a fitting backdrop for the 'Grand Nordic Balls', charity events held nightly in port and featuring celebrated bands such as Acker Bilk. A silver model of the long ship was presented by the Captain to dignitaries at each venue. As a goodwill, flag-waving publicity exercise the tour proved highly successful.

Business blossomed even more rapidly than Thoresen could have predicted, however it was an intrinsically seasonal service and therefore securing winter charters was an important consideration from the start. The company had investigated repositioning at least one ferry to the Southern Hemisphere, which made eminent good sense given the opposite summer seasons. The La Plata crossing from Buenos Aires to Montevideo was a similar duration to the cross-channel service but tentative plans were ultimately thwarted by the deteriorating political situation in Argentina. Charters were therefore sought closer to home and with only a single ship required to fulfil the winter timetable Viking II commenced a two month charter on the Atlantic Steam Navigation Co.'s Tilbury-Antwerp service in February 1965, following its tour of Britain, a contract fulfilled in the following two winters by Viking I. Whilst Viking II was plying back and forth to Belgium her younger sister Viking III was preparing to be named by a director's wife, Mrs. Roald Auckner. The ceremony took place at Lubeck on 10th March 1965, after which the almost structurally complete skeleton of the ship was taken to the fitting out berth to be readied for her 25th June maiden sailing.

As with the first ship there were last ditch complications, although this time it was the starboard engine that was to blame. On trials off Lubeck it was discovered that the engine and shaft were out of kilter and the ensuing realignment delayed the acceptance of the ship and her delivery voyage by a full week until 23rd June. That evening she finally departed the builder and headed south west, only to encounter unseasonably torrid weather in the North Sea which further delayed her arrival at Southampton. Although already running some two hours late, thanks to the efficiency and dedication of the crew, company, port and agents staff she was stored, loaded and sailed on her maiden crossing just ninety minutes later, with Captain Giaever once more presiding on the bridge.

At the end of the 1965 season a new, experimental, winter triangular service was timetabled, with Sunday night sailings from Southampton to Le Havre and Cherbourg from where the ferry returned to her home port for Monday evening. Having proved unsuccessful a more straightforward six times weekly Le Havre service was introduced the following winter, Viking II undertaking the task whilst Viking III started the first of what became an annual eight month charter to Lion Ferry for their Harwich-Bremerhaven route. Cherbourg was dropped as an 'off-season' destination entirely.

Thoresen's success, particularly on the Le Havre service, inevitably spiked the interest of competitors and it wasn't long before the orange hulled Vikings were sharing the sea lanes with a joint British and French operation known as Normandy Ferries. With its freight business under threat P&O's General Steam Navigation Company (GSNC) joined forces with the Société Anonyme de Gerance et d'Armenent (SAGA), introducing the elegant Nantes built Dragon and Leopard in 1967 and 1968 respectively.

1968 would prove a pivotal year for all three Viking ships and indeed the company itself. Although a relative newcomer to the scene Thoresen was one of only two privately owned channel ferry operators. The other company enjoyed a much longer heritage, having pioneered a car ferry service across the Channel forty years previously. Captain Stuart Townsend was a fascinating character who synthesised his passion for cars with the family shipping business to introduce the first regular car and passenger carrying vessel, the chartered Artificer, in 1928. Having been usurped by the nationalised shipping companies in the post war era and needing additional funds Townsend Brothers Ferries sold out to a Midlands based conglomerate, George Nott Industries Ltd., in 1959. Although it had never been involved in shipping before, the eponymous founder clearly had more than a passing interest in the industry, for when the first fruits of George Nott's investment, Free Enterprise, was introduced in 1962 she wore a bright green hull, allegedly modelled on Nott's affection for the 'Green Goddess', Cunard's famous cruise ship Caronia. In 1965, the year after Viking I inaugurated Thoresens Southampton-Cherbourg service, Townsend Car Ferries introduced the innovative Free Enterprise II, the first British flag Ro-Ro vessel and the first providing two full decks of car space that could be loaded or unloaded simultaneously via a new two-tier link-span at Dover.

The two companies shared a common philosophy and perhaps most importantly a common source of funds, Hambro's Bank. In order to fund additional tonnage and squarely meet the competition from the Rail companies at Dover and Southern Ferries at Southampton, a merger, effectively a take-over, was proposed. Following the board's recommendation Thoresen shareholders readily accepted the parent company offer and Townsend Thoresen was born. The three Vikings and their freight-only fleet mate, Viking IV, were assigned to Thoresen Car Ferries A/S, a Norwegian registered holding company which would charter the ships to a George Nott Industries Ltd. subsidiary trading company, Thoresen Car Ferries Ltd.

Other than a change of funnel livery (a stylised TTF replaced the former motif) and the company name on the flanks there was no material change to the ships' initial employment. The Free Enterprise ships lost their green hulls which were replaced by the Vikings' orange and the combined fleet was marketed in a single brochure, under the European Ferries Group name. However an indication of the flexibility inherent within the combined group was evidenced in November 1968 when Viking II provided six weeks cover on the sister company's Dover-Zeebrugge service.

The three Viking ships generally provided reliable and trouble free service but inevitably there were periodic mechanical gremlins and occasional mishaps. The latter included a collision between Viking II and five French fishing boats off Le Havre in early June 1970, one of which was tragically sunk in the encounter. Then there was the weather. Viking III was in the wars when heavy seas in the Channel on 9th December 1965 resulted in the cancellation of the following day's sailing. Just over a year later, on Christmas Eve 1966, she had to turn back to Bremerhaven whilst on charter to Lion Ferry having encountered a particularly violent North Sea storm. The most serious weather related incident arguably befell Viking I in November 1969, whilst on charter to Silja Line. Plying between the Finnish port of Turku and Stockholm she was buffeted by Force 11 winds and driven ashore which necessitated a dry docking and eleven days of hull repairs in the Swedish capital. Winter charters saw the ships in ports as diverse as Gothenburg and Belfast, Turku and Antwerp but it was a very short term charter that perhaps grabbed the headlines the most. On 12th September 1974 the Compagnie Générale Transatlantique negotiated the use of Viking III to tender marooned passengers and luggage from the company's liner France, which had been seized by its mutinous crew and anchored in the entry channel to Le Havre.

Viking III was configured differently from her sisters, the forward row of windows on Boat and Promenade Deck betrayed a decision to swap the 'Le Commandant' restaurant and Cafeteria, the former now enjoying sweeping sea views, whilst the latter now opened out onto the adjacent sun deck. Cabin and sleeperette facilities were also changed, to provide overnight facilities for almost 350 passengers. It was an indication of how Thoresen would constantly upgrade and reconfigure the ships to meet passenger expectations and as a reaction to operational experience. In February 1967 Viking I had

Above: The Viking Valiant as the jumbo-ised Pride of Cherbourg leaving Portsmouth in 2001. She was lengthened and widened in 1986 which increased her gross tonnage to 14,760. *(Nigel Lawrence)*
Below: The 6,355grt Viking Venturer at Spithead in June 1977. *(Don Smith/photo-transport.com)*
Bottom: The Viking Venturer as P&O's 14,760gt Pride of Hampshire leaving Portsmouth in July 2002. She was jumbo-ised in 1986. *(Nigel Lawrence)*

additional cabin facilities added aft of the bridge but the most significant refits occurred over the winter of 1969/70. At this time the previously enclosed 'Smuggler's Cave' bar forward on Promenade Deck was rebuilt and made open plan, whilst the popular, adjacent Smorgasbord was reconfigured and renamed 'The Norseman'. Structurally a portion of the aft sundeck on Boat Deck was enclosed to make space for 50 additional sleeperette recliners.

The formation of European Ferries Group inevitably led to investment in new tonnage. With Free Enterprise II supplementing the summer schedules from Southampton it was clear additional capacity was needed. In December 1970 it was announced that five new ships were to be ordered, two Free Enterprise class ones for Dover service and three enlarged 'Super-Viking's' for Southampton. Built at Aalborg Vaerft A/S in Denmark the latter ferries entered service in 1975 and 1976 as Viking Venturer, Viking Valiant and finally Viking Voyager precipitating, it appeared, the withdrawal and sale of the incumbent Vikings. However on 23rd October 1974 Viking II had inaugurated a new, twice daily service between Felixstowe and Zeebrugge and so one of the new ships, Viking Venturer, was earmarked to operate in tandem with her older fleet mate on this route. 1976 was a pivotal year for the UK ferry scene with the opening of a new facility at Portsmouth, the key incentive for shifting operations from Southampton being the more positive labour relations at its Hampshire neighbour. "…..as a gesture to the people of Portsmouth, who have welcomed us so warmly into their city", Townsend Thoresen Chairman Keith Wickenden presided over a renaming ceremony prior to the company's inaugural 17th June sailing to Cherbourg, Viking I becoming Viking Victory in honour of Nelson's famous flagship, prize exhibit at the adjacent Naval Base.

Whilst Viking Victory was plying new ground her sister Viking II was undertaking a first summer season charter between Denmark and Sweden for Lion Ferry. Effectively surplus to Townsend Thoresen's requirements she was quickly snapped up at the end of the charter by British Rail, through Lloyd's Leasing, and delivered to the company's conversion facility at Holyhead on 22nd December. She was earmarked to spearhead a new Sealink service from Portsmouth to the Channel Islands, at the end of what became a long and protracted refit. A full thirteen months after her purchase, resplendent in her new owner's blue hull with prominent white company name, white superstructure and red funnels, sporting the BR motif, the rechristened Earl William entered service on 16th January 1978. In fact she was joining a near sister in service between the UK and the Islands, the KEH designed, Weymouth based Earl Godwin, whose similar dimensions

made her ideal for the tight confines of St. Peter Port and St. Helier harbours.

As if unable to be separated, Viking Victory joined the others on charter to Sealink for Channel Island service during April 1978, before resuming her Portsmouth-Cherbourg service over the summer months. The previous month Viking III had inaugurated a new Townsend Thoresen service between Rotterdam and Felixstowe, operating until October when Viking Victory took over, thereby releasing the last of the original Vikings to try a new winter timetable between Kristiansand and Leith. Neither of these services endured, the Scotland to Norway one ending after just one season and the Suffolk to Holland one terminating in September 1979.

Amongst a number of charters in the first few months of the new decade, Viking III found herself standing in for the Earl William in May 1980, whilst the latter underwent repairs to a faulty generator. The last of the trio was very busy that year, spending much of it on the Irish Sea with two spells on Sealink Manx Line's Heysham-Douglas service bracketing a summer season on B+I Line's Pembroke Dock to Rosslare service. In 1981, once more surplus to Townsend Thoresen's plans Viking III spent the summer on charter to Fred. Olsen Line, plying the company's Kristiansand-Hirtshals service before heading to Gothenburg for an extended lay-up. In the winter she was put on the sales list. She was sold the following year, 1982, to Da-No Linjen, becoming that company's Terje Vigen on their busy Frederikshavn-Frederikstad itinerary.

Somewhat ironically therefore, the first of the Thoresen Vikings, Viking Victory, was the last to leave the fleet. After a spring charter on the Sealink Manx Line service she maintained her owners Portsmouth-Cherbourg link throughout the summer of 1982, concluding with a 1330 departure from the French port on Monday 13th September. In the forthcoming year Townsend Thoresen would redirect all their South Coast services from Southampton to its great rival along the coast, shifting the newer 'Super Vikings' to take over Viking Victory's role. So the pioneering Viking was put up for sale and acquired by the wonderfully named Euphoria Navigation Company, based in Limassol and renamed Sun Boat to operate the equally upbeat sounding 'Happiness Ferries' service between Greece and Syria, calling at Rhodes, Cyprus and Lebanon en route.

The Vikings enjoyed long, diverse and interesting, if not always totally successful, 'after lives'. The most widely travelled was the former Viking I. After barely two years in the Eastern Med she became a Pilgrim carrier in the Red Sea, linking Suez Jeddah and Aqaba as Caravan. The following year, 1986, in a bid to avoid arrest for unpaid debts and briefly renamed Vasmed she circumnavigated the African continent, a remarkable voyage that included bunkering stops at Djibouti, Cape Town and Las Palmas. She was back on the Piraeus-Latakia service as Sunny Boat later that same year, garnering headlines for her role in extricating refugees from war-torn Beirut. For 1990 she moved west, chartered by European Seaways for the Patras-Brindisi tourist service as European Glory. Then in July 1991 she was purchased by Regonti Navigation Company and operated on the same Adriatic route linking Italy and Greece for Hellenic Mediterranean Lines (HML) as Neptunia. The new service was so successful that HML purchased the ship after that first season and renamed her Media II, for a settled decade of operation lasting into the new millennium.

Stepping back to the 1970s, Earl William, the erstwhile Viking II, endured a troubled start to her Channel Island service. Her machinery proved particularly problematic, necessitating expensive and time consuming repairs as well as fleet re-jigs and short term charter cover. There were other mishaps. In January 1979 she became entangled with mooring chains that buckled a prop shaft and badly damaged her propellers. Nevertheless she became a staple part of the Guernsey and Jersey run, initially from Portsmouth and subsequently, after the introduction of the larger Earl Granville, from Weymouth. The year 1981 was something of an annus horribilis for the Earl William and indeed Earl Granville, with more mechanical failures and two groundings limiting her time in service. Privatisation and the ensuing sale to Sea Containers in July 1984 proved calamitous for the service and ship. The acquirer initially considered transferring Earl William to the Mediterranean as the maritime extension of their Orient Express service but instead she and Earl Granville were to be part of a rather bizarre £5 million upgrading of the Channel Island route and a supplementary Cherbourg itinerary, to 'Bateau de Luxe' standards, as part of a new overnight 'Starliner' service. Following a delayed delivery from her extensive refit at Aalborg (due to Danish strike action) Earl William started the Starliner service on 24th April 1985, the 'up-market' product included a buffet dinner, ensuite luxury cabin and full English breakfast. Sea Containers had not only misread the requirements of the Channel Island service but also underestimated the competition. Brittany Ferries, through their Channel Island Ferries subsidiary introduced the Corbière, a sister ship to Earl Granville but with unpretentious facilities and lower fares, better suited to the Islands market. For 1986 Earl William received further investment with an additional motorists lounge built on the original 'Upper Bridge Deck' but with the British Ferries share of traffic plummeting and the announcement of a joint service prompting union strike action, she was withdrawn and laid up in the River Fal. She endured a particularly inglorious fall from glory. After serving as an accommodation ship for asylum seekers at Harwich, in which she ran aground during the Great Storm of October 1987, she introduced a new short lived Liverpool-Dun Laoghaire service before a further period of lay-up. In 1990 she deputised on Folkestone-Boulogne and Irish Sea services before moving south for an intended summer Mediterranean charter between Tunisia and France. The charterers refused to accept her and she ultimately returned to lay-up at Milford Haven. In April 1992 the rather sorry tale of Earl William's Sealink career came to an end when she was sold for £1.5 million to the Valetta based Ardonis Shipping Co. who abbreviated her name to William.

The former Viking II spent the rest of the 1990s being passed from pillar to post, under multiple owners primarily on Adriatic service as Pearl William, Mar-Julia and Cesme Stern, before her sale in 2000 to Windward Lines, St. Vincent. She was moved to Trogir, Croatia for a conversion and refit into Windward II, once more bearing an orange hull but destined to stay at the shipyard for three long years.

Overcoming financial problems Viking II's Caribbean owners finally secured their ship in 2003 and Windward II sailed from Croatia to Port of Spain. Alas her situation did not improve and after a collision with the tanker Nelson she was arrested at the end of January 2004. Released in April the same year she was chartered to the government of Trinidad and Tobago for inter-island service in August and September. Having been laid up in September 2004 in the Gulf of Pania it appeared the end was nigh but a brand new lease of life was around the corner.

In 2006 she was acquired by Treasure Queen Tours and sent for a $30 million internal reconstruction in preparation for a new role as a hotel and convention venue. On 1st September 2007 the renamed Ocean Pearl opened her stern ramp, which had been converted into the main entrance, to customers. With her engines stripped out and interiors gutted the former Viking II now sported 'The Aurora' conference hall, luxury cabins in the 'Treasures Floatel', and the 'High Tide' seafood and steakhouse indoor/outdoor restaurant offering the somewhat dubious novelty 'lifeboat' dining venue. The 'Seacrets Ocean Bar and Lounge' became a favourite venue for evening cocktails. She was moored with her stern attached to a specially constructed, palm lined pontoon at Williams Bay, Chaguaramus, Trinidad & Tobago.

The Ocean Pearl venture lasted a while but three and a half years later, devoid of power, the ship was involved in a bizarre incident whilst under tow to Venezuela. On nd April 2011 the tug Icon 1 struck a drilling rig dragging the former Viking II along

Above: The Viking Valiant and Viking Venturer as the pilgrim ships Pride of Al Salam 1 and Pride of Al Salam 2 of Shipping Endeavours Corporation seen at Suez in April 2003. The Valiant became Nador in 2004, Mogador in 2005 before being renamed Mogado for her final voyage to Alang where she arrived on 6th March 2010. The Venturer became Oujda in 2004 before arriving at Alang on 4th April 2010 to be broken up. *(Nigel Lawrence)*

Below: The 6,387grt Viking Viscount in The Solent in 1978. In 1989 she became Pride of Winchester of P&O and in 1994 she joined Lassithiotiki Shipping as Vitsentzos Kornaros. *(Don Smith/photo-transport.com)*

Bottom: The Viking Viscount as the Vitsentzos Kornarosseen in Piraeus in September 2009. On 13th April 2020 she arrived at Aliaga to be broken up. *(Dave Smith/photo-transport.com)*

which then collided with the rig's mooring chains. The tug slipped its tow as the former ferry took on water, drifted and sank a short while later.

Bucking the trend for superannuated UK ferries, Viking III spent most of her post-Townsend Thoresen career in the Baltic Sea, rather than migrating south to a warm and relatively tranquil retirement in the Eastern Mediterranean. Having spent four years as Terje Vigen linking Denmark and Norway she was purchased by Rederi Narko A/S in 1986 and chartered as Scandinavia to the Finnish KG Line for their Gavle-Kaskinen route. In 1990 Hango Line of Finland acquired her but promptly sold her on to Europe Cruise Line A/S, the first in a succession of Norwegian owners, for Baltic and latterly Oslofjord service. The ship seemed destined for a dramatic finale in October 2000 when sold to Buquebus Los Ciprese SA of Montevideo and was scheduled to sail south to Uruguay for service across the River Plate, akin to the route envisaged by Otto Thoresen almost forty years earlier. However it wasn't to be.

Having already exceeded the lifespan of many of their peers the former Vikings endured well into the millennium, in body if not necessarily in spirit. The last of the class is still with us.

Viking I's successful stint on HML's Italy-Greece service lasted until March 2002 when she was sold to Palmier Ferries, an Italian operation that modified her name to Media V. The following year she started a Brindisi-Vlore (Albania) route, despite a bright new yellow hulled livery the Thoresen's cross-Channel trailblazer was now on the lowest rung of the Mediterranean ferry scene. The ship was arrested for unpaid debts twice in subsequent years, as she languished in one lay-up berth after another before finally going for scrap in 2008.

Viking III's aborted move to South America was followed by three years of inactivity and then a series of unsuccessful attempts to revive her fortunes in and around Scandinavian waters. In March 2007 she finally left Norway for Perama and then Brindisi, to be refitted for the Brindisi-Vlore (Albania) route that her oldest sister had earlier frequented. Under the ownership of North Bay Transportes Maritimos Ltd. she entered service as Red Star 1 in August the same year for Star ferries. In 2011 Red Star 1 undertook a number of humanitarian voyages to evacuate refugees from the Libyan civil war and the following year operated a Bari-Durres service before reverting to her original Brindisi-Vlore connection in 2013. Presently she is laid up at Piraeus but with the Covid-19 pandemic and economic aftermath drastically affecting all shipping activities, it can surely only be a matter of time before this 55 year old veteran finally rings up "finished with engines".

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FEATURE BY NORMAN MIDDLEMISS

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF BELSHIPS

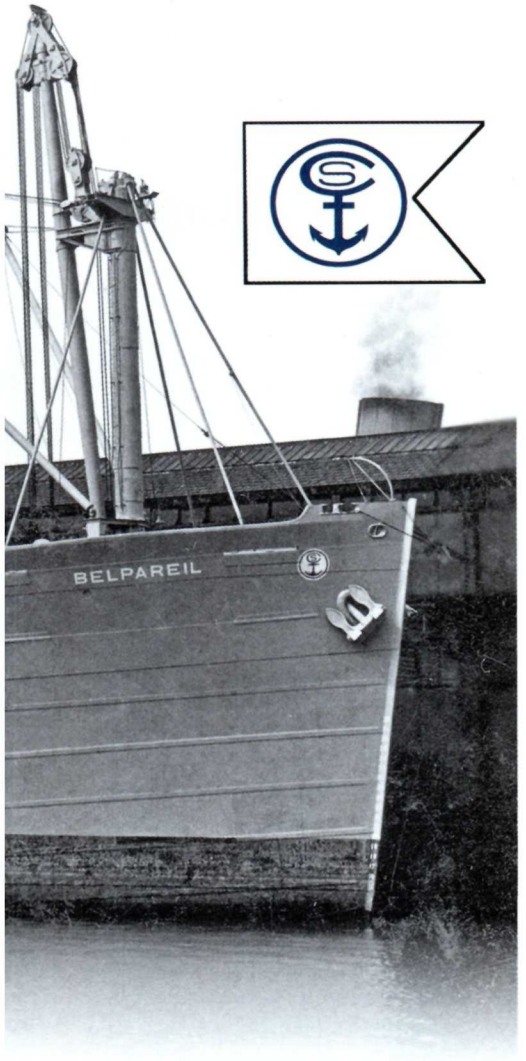
Christen Smith - The Pioneer and the Greatest of the Heavy Lifters

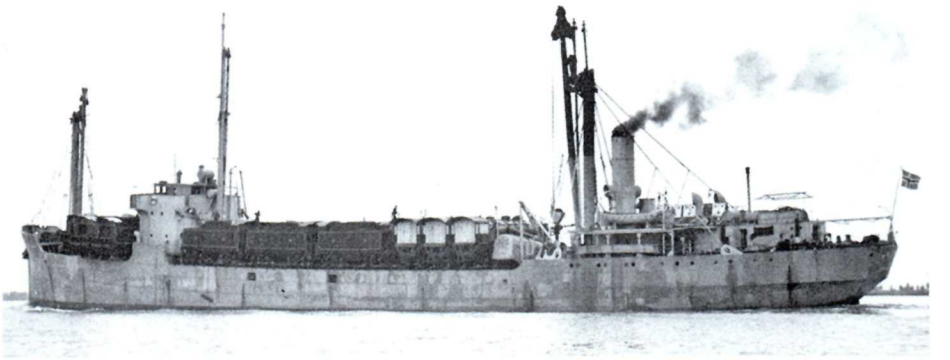
The volatility of freight rates in shipping is sometimes almost beyond belief. This was the case after Capt. Christen Smith (1883-1940) had set up his own company in 1918 as A/S Christen Smiths Rederi and ordered two ordinary engines 'midships cargo ships of 3,400 dwt to be delivered in 1920/21 by the Moss Vaerft yard in Norway. The boom and slump in freight rates in 1920/21 saw rates plummet by 40% in a few weeks. The first of the pair of ships obtained a one year charter and was then laid up, while the second went straight from the shipyard to the lay up buoys. Capt. Christen Smith then had to think 'outside the box', and he and his brothers designed a conversion of his two new ships as pioneer heavy lift ships, with eight heavy lift derricks able to lift locomotives, carriages, barges, tugs, lightships etc using spreader beams in a single lift onto the clear foredeck and aft deck of the two ships. Previously, transporting locomotives to far distant parts of the world involved 'knocking down' the items into many smaller components for ease of transport and then reassembling them at their destination.

The two new pioneer heavy lifters were named Belgot and Belfri and registered under single ship companies, with Capt. Basberg in command of Belgot. Capt. Christen Smith may have commanded Belfri, as he had in 1910 been in command of the largest ship in the Norwegian Merchant Navy at the young age of 27 years. His ship was the steamer Henrik Ibsen of 4,671 grt built in 1906 by Sir Raylton Dixon & Company at Middlesbrough. She had dimensions of overall length 383.9 feet, moulded beam of 52.8 feet, and moulded depth of 17.7 feet, and was a 'three islander' with a long bridge deck of 114 feet, short fo'c'stle and poop of 36 feet and 33 feet, with a triple expansion steam engine by the North Eastern Marine Engineering Co. Ltd. on Tyneside. Capt. Christen Smith also saw service with the Royal Norwegian Navy during World War I.

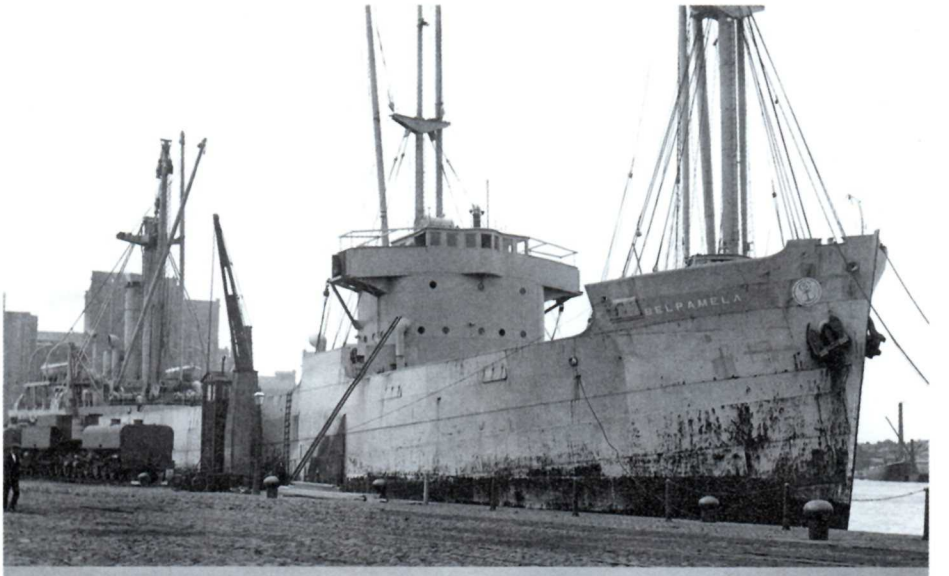
Belgot and Belfri could carry eight locomotives on the foredeck and eight locomotives on the aft deck, all arranged athwartships. The two sisters had dimensions of overall length of 275.7 feet, moulded beam of 43.7 feet, moulded depth of 18.9 feet, with a bridge deck of length 82 feet, and short fo'c'stle and poop of 32 feet and 27 feet. A service speed of ten knots was obtained from a triple expansion steam engine by the builders. Three slightly larger purpose built engines aft heavy lift ships were completed by Armstrong, Whitworth & Co. Ltd. on the Tyne during 1924 to 1926 as Beldis, Belnor and Belray. The latter ship was launched on 15th February 1926 at Low Walker by Mrs. B. Irvin, wife of the manager of the Armstrong, Whitworth locomotive department. She had dimensions of overall length of 328.9 feet, moulded beam of 46.0 feet, moulded depth of 23.3 feet, and of 2,888 grt and 4,280 dwt. She had a bridge deck of length 82.0 feet, fo'c'stle and poop of 26.0 and 23.0 feet. The trio were all powered by Armstrong-Sulzer diesel engines of 1,350 bhp at 110 rpm to give a service speed of ten knots. They had two holds, and their nine heavy lift derricks and eight winches could lift up to 120 tons on one derrick and 50 tons on the other derricks. The derricks could swivel to ease the loading and discharging of awkward heavy lifts, and the blocks and pulleys were made of high tensile steel, with large spreader beams to spread out the huge weights.

A further quartet of engines aft heavy lifters came from the same yard on Tyneside during 1926/28, as the sisters Belmoira and Belpamela of 3,214 grt, and the much larger twin screw sisters Belpareil and Beljeanne of 7,203 grt, and all powered by four cylinder or eight cylinder Sulzer diesel engines. The latter pair were the finest heavy lift ships that Capt. Christen Smith had yet designed, with special ballasting arrangements, great stability, strong decks, hatch coamings and covers, and long pillar free holds. The pair had dimensions of overall length 414.6 feet, moulded beam of 67.1 feet, moulded depth of 31.0 feet, with a narrow bridge deck 'midships of 32.0 feet and fo'c'stle and poop of length 40.0 feet and 96.0 feet. The pumping systems for controlling the heavy lifts over one side of their hulls, moved a total of 2,184 tons of water ballast to tanks on the other side of their hulls to give stability when lift-





Left: The 7,203grt Belpareil was built in 1926 by Armstrong, Whitworth & Co. at High Walker. In 1965 she was sold to New Zealnd Carriers Inc. and renamed New Zealand Venture and in 1970 she became Buga of Losinjska Plovidba. She was broken up by Brodospas at Split in December 1984. *(John B. Hill collection)*
Above: The 2,888grt Belray was built in 1926 by Armstrong, Whitworth & Co. at High Walker. In 1961 she was sold to Cia Naviera Soraya SA of the Lebanon and renamed Artigas. On 25th March 1970 she arrived at Hamburg to be broken up by Eisen u. Metall. *(John B. Hill collection)*
Below: The 3,215grt Belpamela was built in 1928 by Armstrong, Whitworth & Co. at High Walker. On 11th April 1947 she sank in the North Atlantic after her cargo of railway engines shifted while on a voyage from New York to Cherbourg. *(John B. Hill collection)*
Bottom: The 7,843grt Beljeanne was built in 1947 by Vickers-Armstrongs at High Walker having been launched as the Empire Ethelbert. In 1964 she was sold to Bacong Shipping and renamed Southern Cross and in 1966 they renamed her Southern Hope. In 1968 she joined M.M. Shipping as Virginia Second before being broken up by Amakasu Sangyo KK at Aioi in January 1969. *(FotoFlite)*



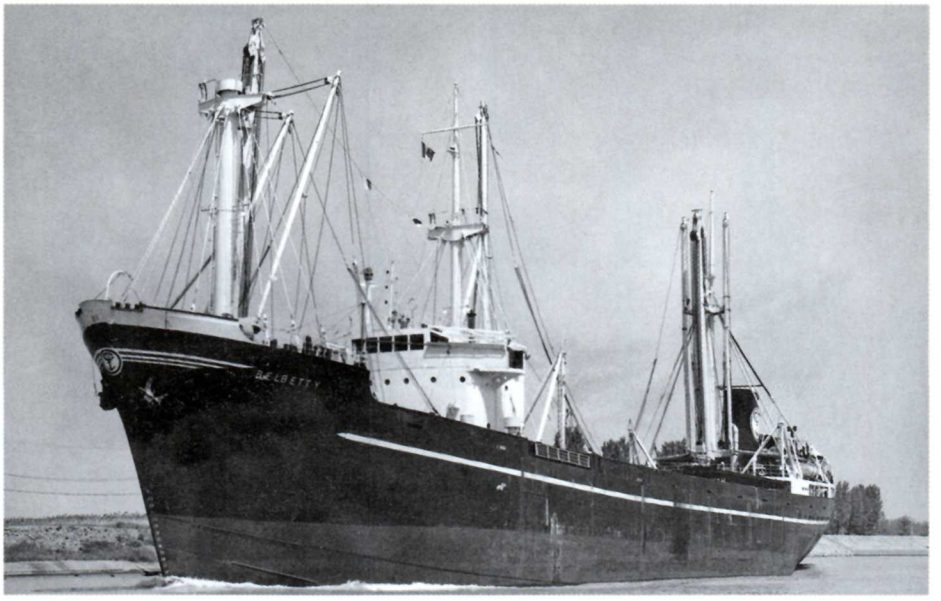
ing. The absolute minimum number of bulkheads were erected that would comply with Class Society rules. The holds were wide and clear on their long decks, the hatches were especially strengthened to take really heavy loads on top, and strong stump heavy lift derricks of 125 ton capacity with heavy duty winches were fitted.

The Depression brought heavy financial losses to Capt. Christen Smith and his fleet of nine heavy lifters, and the company was financially restructured in 1935 under a new name of Skibs A/S Belships, and known throughout the world as 'Belships'. A three hold ship with two holds in front of the bridge and one aft was purchased as Port Alfred from the Anticosti Shipping Company of Montreal in 1933 and renamed Beldagny. She had been built in 1930 by the South Bank yard of Smith's Dock Co. Ltd. to transport bauxite to Port Alfred at the head of the Saguenay river, a tributary of the St. Lawrence. She had dimensions of length 344.3 feet, moulded beam of 60.3 feet, and moulded depth of 27.3 feet, with three boilers providing steam at 200 psi to a triple expansion steam engine, which was boosted by an exhaust turbine shortly after her purchase. She had a dozen heavy lift derricks and a dozen winches and could lift up to 7,100 tons of heavy lift cargo. She was sold in 1938 to Foss Beck Shipping Company (A. C. Lensen, London) and renamed Foss Beck. She was requisitioned by the Admiralty in 1940 and

Above: The 7,244grt Belfri was built in 1943 by Todd-Houston as the Liberty Ship Thomas W. Gregory. She joined Belships in 1949. In 1960 she was sold to St. Lawrence Shipping Co. Inc. and renamed Romance. On 30th October 1969 she suffered a serious fire at Naples and on 30th April 1970 she arrived at Split to be broken up by Brodospas. *(FotoFlite)*

Below: The 3,984grt Belbetty was built in 1949 by Burmeister & Wain at Copenhagen. In 1969 she was sold to Colon Shipping and renamed Dimitrios and in 1973 she moved to Luen Mee Trading as Sea Hero. She was broken up by San Woo at Hong Kong in July 1977. *(John B. Hill collection)*

Bottom: The 24,715dwt tanker Belfri was built in 1951by Harland & Wolff at Belfast as the France Stove for Belships and Lorentzens Rederi, her name being changed to Belfri in 1962. In 1968 she was sold to Union Petroleum and renamed Philemon and in 1974 she joined Moonlight Shipping as Moonlight. On 4th July 1975 she arrived at Kaohsiung to be broken up by Fu Chiang Steel & Iron Co. Ltd. *(FotoFlite)*



commissioned as HMS Foss Beck for the transport of aircraft and as a boom carrier.

Several examples are now given of their worldwide heavy lift voyages during the inter-war years:-

(A) 200 locomotives were delivered plus their tenders and other equipment to Belgian State Railways during the early 1920s by **Belgot** and **Belfri** in many heavy lifts and voyages.

(B) A large number of locomotives were transported to India for the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway, involving Capt. Christen Smith making a special visit to India to inspect discharge facilities there for a long series of voyages carrying railway stock.

(C) Belpamela took a heavy load in February 1930 of sixteen locomotives, each weighing 90 tons, and nine tenders, a seaplane tender and a red hulled lightship with tall central tower and lantern weighing in at 220 tons from Liverpool to India. She used her own heavy lift derricks fixed to heavy lift stump masts to lift the cargo into the wide, large holds.

(D) Belmoira, sister of Belpamela took a heavy load to South Africa of sixteen railway locomotives, a large tug, and barges lifted in a series of lifts on to her specially strengthened decks, all transported in one voyage.

(E) Belpareil loaded at Schiedam in 1931 a total of 1,302 tons of locomotives and tenders into her hold, four barges totalling 633 tons, 110 tons of steel piping, and two tugs and a pilot launch onto her deck. The final lift for this voyage was a hopper barge weighing in at 200 tons, which was the heaviest single lift ever up to that point in time.

(F) The Buenos Aires Central Terminal Railway Company Railways received in 1924 seventeen railway locomotives and their tenders on the decks of Christen Smith heavy lifters, and a further two dozen rail carriages and two barges in the second half of 1930 on **Belpamela**.

(G) A dozen barges built by the Saltney yard of J. Crichton & Co. Ltd. were loaded athwartships onboard **Belray** at Connah's Quay in Flintshire for export shortly before the yard closed in 1935.

(H) Belpamela loaded a full cargo of locomotives at Birkenhead in December 1935 for China, and then a 120 ton lightship was loaded at Woolwich for Rangoon in Burma in January 1937. A full cargo of long oil towers each weighing 100 tons was loaded athwartships in the Thames for the Persian Gulf and extended over the side of the hull by 18 feet on each side. The Coronation Scot locomotive and train was transported from Southampton to Baltimore in February 1939, with the locomotive in the hold and the carriages on deck.

(I) Belmoira loaded the lightship Bahrim onto her deck on the Thames for the Far East in the summer of 1935, and on 31st January

1938 she sailed from Wilmington (Delaware) with twenty American built 'Pacific' locomotives for Hong Kong and eventually bound for China.

(J) Belmoira sailed from Port Talbot on 15th September 1928 bound for Port Kembla in New South Wales via the Panama Canal with a cargo of 4,074 tons of steelwork and machinery that comprised a 'knocked down' rolling mill plant for Australian Iron & Steel Ltd. into 50 ton pieces. She was briefly aground in the Panama Canal and after minor repairs reached her destination, with reconstruction of the rolling mill taking place after Belpamela arrived with the rest of the mill in March 1929.

(K) Belmoira sailed from New York in September 1931 for Russia with locomotives under the command of Capt. Hald when she picked up three Transatlantic aviators on a flight from Lisbon to New York after they ditched in the sea about 80 miles off Cape Race.

(L) Belnor transported a full load of locomotives from Antwerp to Wellington in New Zealand in July 1927, and another cargo of locomotives for Barahona near Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic in March 1928. She sailed from Liverpool in late December1931 with three lightships, each weighing 140 tons for headlands on the Burmese coast. She sailed from Baltimore with 2,417 tons of mill machinery and components in March 1939 for the Shotton strip mill on the river Dee. She encountered gales in the Atlantic and sent out an SOS after four pieces of machinery weighing 120 tons were lost overboard, which was answered by the Italian liner Conte di Savoia and approached her but no assistance was necessary.

(M) Beldis sailed from the Tyne with a full cargo of locomotives for Apapa Wharf in Lagos in early 1927 after arriving back from Australia in late 1926. She had sailed from the Tyne with another cargo of 14 locomotives for Adelaide in late January 1926, with another 16 locomotives of this order carried by **Belray**, for delivery to Ocean Steamer Wharf in Adelaide for the South Australian Railways. **Beldis** completed the unloading of the last locomotive on 17th May 1926, with **Belray** arriving at Adelaide on 28th June 1926 and needed the help of equipment from **Beldis** for her discharge of locomotives. **Belray** then moved in ballast to load sugar at Mauritius for the U.K., and **Beldis** loaded jarrah wood at Bunbury for South Africa, and then ballasted back to the U.K.

(N) The tug Lady Cadell was loaded onboard **Belmoira** at Gladstone Dock in Liverpool for Banagar in India in 1935.

The Christen Smith fleet in the inter-war years had grey hulls with red boot topping, grey lifeboats, uppers, masts and derricks and a completely grey funnel. The Head Office was at Bydo Alle in Oslo, however Capt. Christen Smith lost control of his company in the mid 1930s during the financial crisis and reconstruction of the company, with a controlling share taken by three brothers of the Stove Lorentzen shipping family named Axel, Frithjof and Jorgen Lorentzen. Belgot had been sold in 1929, Belfri in 1934 and Beldis in 1936, with Beljeanne sold in 1937 to Skibs A/S Ringwood (Olav Ringdal of Oslo, manager) and renamed Ringwood, but she was captured on 14th October 1940 and scuttled by the German raider Orion when 800 miles north east of Nauru while on a voyage from Shanghai to Nauru in ballast.

WORLD WAR II

A fleet of five heavy lifters was owned by Belships on the outbreak of war on 3rd September 1939, however Belpamela was missed by three torpedoes that detonated prematurely from U32 on 2nd March 1940 en-route into Kirkwall for inspection of cargo. Another cargo ship, Lagaholm, on a voyage from Baltimore to Malmo with a mixed cargo was also ordered into Kirkwall but was sunk by gunfire from U32, with Belpamela rescuing her crew. Belpamela came under German control for the rest of the war on 12th July 1940. Belmoira was torpedoed and sunk by U26 in the Western Approaches in position 48°5' North, 10°30'W on 30th June 1940. She was on a voyage from Rufisque in Senegal in ballast, having come under French Vichy control at Dakar, her crew being fortunately saved.

The remaining three ship Belships fleet was managed from London and New York by an organisation known as Nortraship (The Norwegian Shipping and Trade Mission), whose negotiations with the Ministry of Shipping were conducted by Mr. Lorentzen of Belships, aided by Mr. John O. Egeland, Mr. Thomas Fearnley, Mr. I. H. Olsen and Mr. Klaus Wise-Hansen. Thus, most Norwegian ships that were on the high seas at the declaration of war then sailed for the Allied war effort during the long war, with 150 tankers and 400,000 dwt of dry cargo ships helping the Allied war effort from 24th June 1940. Capt. Christen Smith had also escaped Norway during the German invasion of early April 1940, but he unfortunately died of cancer in London later in 1940 at the age of 57 years. However, most of the Belships Head Office in Oslo had little or no contact with the heavy lifter fleet during the war.

The requirement for the transport of heavy war material as well as heavy landing craft and marine equipment, prompted the British Government to order ten heavy lifters of 10,300 dwt to the design of Belpareil. They had three holds with steel buttresses to port and starboard of the bulkheads between the holds, and four cross bunker tanks for oil fuel or water ballast directly below the 'midships superstructure and navigating bridge. This structure had the ship's hospital and accommodation for officers on the lower of four decks, with more officer's accommodation on the second level, the Master's accommodation and radio room and cabin for the radio officer on the third level just below the chartroom and wheelhouse on the navigating bridge. The heavy lift derricks were three in number and each of 120 tons capacity, with ten more derricks of five or ten tons capacity and varying in length from 51 feet to 71 feet.

This war built fleet of heavy lifters was completed between 1942 and 1947 by yards on the Tyne (Walker Naval Yard), at Barrow, and on the Clyde (Greenock Dockyard Co. Ltd. They were given the names of Empire Elaine, Empire Charmian, Empire Viceroy, Empire Admiral, Empire Athelstan, Empire Ethelbert, Empire Byng, Empire Marshal, Empire Wallace and Empire Canute. They were managed by the Ministry of War Transport with some technical assistance from a few members of the Christen Smith fleet who had escaped from Norway in April 1940 to Britain. The maiden voyage of Empire Marshal in November 1945 involved a large number of nineteen small craft at Birken head and the Gladstone Dock in Liverpool, where a wide oil separator was loaded and overhanging her sides so that she could safely navigate the locks at Liverpool. The maiden voyage of Empire in May 1945 for Bombay involved carrying five large landing craft and five tugs to be loaded onto her decks.

POST-WAR HEAVY LIFTING

Belships purchased two of these ten war built heavy lifters in 1947, with Empire Canute becoming Belocean and Empire Ethelbert becoming Beljeanne. The latter ship received new oil engines in October 1954, and Belocean and Beljeanne went on to give seventeen years of service to Belships before they were sold for further service in 1964. This pair and the four war survivors of Belpareil, Belnor, Belpamela and Belray, which had made valuable contributions to the war effort, were in demand in post-war years as the world needed to be rebuilt and the devastation of war swept away. Locomotives and railway rolling stock, heavy machinery for industry, and rotors and stators for the turbines of new power stations needed transportation around the world. However, Belpamela sank during a fierce storm on 11th April 1947 when 700 miles south east of Nova Scotia while on a voyage from New York to Cherbourg with a cargo of seventeen railway locomotives, which broke free and rolled out of side of her hull. Nine crew members lost their lives unfortunately, and the replacement locomotives for SNCF Railways of France took five months to reach Cherbourg. Beljeanne and Belocean were employed by the United Nations for the three years of the Korean War from 1950 to 1953.

Above: The 6,520grt Belevelyn was built in 1957 by De Hoop at Lobith. In 1972 she was sold to Seatraveller Shipping of Cyprus and renamed Elkina and in 1980 she joined Libertas Maritime Corporation as Asar. On 8th February 1982 she arrived at Gadani Beach to be broken up by Unitra Ltd. *(FotoFlite)*
Below: The 18,716dwt bulk carrier Belblue was built in 1968 by Bremer Vulkan at Vegesack. In 1975 she was sold to Efniki Cia Naviera and renamed Dimitris E and in 1981 she moved to Universal Shipping as Universe Glory. In the meantime the 1968 built chemical carrier Essi Wilje of Bj. Ruud-Pedersen suffered an engine room fire which destroyed the entire stern section of the ship. Ruud-Pedersen bought the former Belblue, cut off her stern section and joined it to Essi Silje's cargo section. The combined vessel sailed as Essi Silje until 1992 when she was sold to Endeavour Navigation and renamed Aegean Mariner. A further sale in 1995 to Adriatic Tankers saw her sail as Anchen. On 26th August 1996 she arrived at Alang to be broken up by Sanjay Sates Corporation. The cargo section from the former Belblue was converted into the cement barge Concem and in 1986 she capsized at Hinnavågen near Stavanger. *(John B. Hill collection)*
Bottom: The 78,078dwt OBO Belobo was built in 1974 by Bremer Vulkan at Vegesack. In 1985 she joined Marti Denizcilik ve Ticaret AS as Obo Engin and in 1999 she became Kevat II of Vakif Denizcilik. Later that year she was renamed Attar I then Alexandria IV for her final voyage to Alang where she arrived on 23rd November. *(FotoFlite)*

Belnor helped to repatriate War Department locomotives from Palestine to England during 1946, and then was used for an order placed in 1951 by the South Australian Railways Board for locomotives for the hauling of concentrates from Broken Hill to Port Pirie. Belnor arrived at Port Pirie on 1st June 1953 from Dunkirk, and then spent all of the six months of the second half of 1953 completing this order for the transport of locomotives, ten railway distillate tankers, and many heavy alternators and a turbine stator for the Northern Regional Power Station at Port Augusta, further up the Spencer Gulf in South Australia from Port Pirie. Belnor then arrived in Sydney (NSW) on 23rd June 1953 to load four more locomotives and their tenders constructed in Sydney for Port Augusta. The Adelaide Steamship Co. Ltd. were the agents for this cargo, which weighed in at 333 tons excluding the weight of the tenders. Belnor then loaded 3,400 tons of concentrates at Port Pirie and sailed on 17th July 1953 for the U.K., and then loaded up another heavy cargo of locomotives, two transformers, and a quantity of cased machinery at Dunkirk and arrived at Port Pirie again in the middle of December 1953 for final discharge.

Belpareil was sold in 1960 to Bulkships Ltd. of Panama and renamed New Zealand Venture in 1965. She was sold in 1970 to Losinjska Plovidba of Rijeka and renamed Buga, and was broken up at Split in December 1984 by Brodospas after a career of almost sixty years. Belnor was sold to Danish owners in 1956 and renamed Lise, but later sank as the Greek owned Ioanna on 22nd September 1966 five miles off Arzew after an engine room explosion. Belray was sold in 1959 to Bulls Tank Rederi A/S of Sandefjord, and then renamed Artigas by the Pateras Brothers of Piraeus, and arrived at Hamburg on 25th March 1970 to be broken up by Eisen u Metall.

New post-war heavy lifters were completed as Christen Smith of 8,350 dwt equipped with one 200 ton capacity heavy lift derricks and two of 100 tons capacity by the Fredriksstad yard in Norway in 1947, and Belbetty of 5,100 dwt in 1949 by Burmeister & Wain at Copenhagen equipped with 125 ton heavy lift cranes. Three more heavy lifters for Belships came during 1954/57 from Lobith in Holland at the De Hoop yard as Belkarin, Bellis and Belevelyn of 7,000 dwt with two holds and a central stump heavy lift derrick of 140 tons capacity and other derricks on masts fore and aft of the holds. On her maiden voyage, Belkarin transported a heavy load of two dozen locomotives from Liverpool to Bandar Shapour in Iran, and also loaded a full cargo of paper pulp at Kramfors in Northern Sweden in 1966 for Antwerp, passing under the high concrete Sando arch bridge opened in 1943 to reach the Gulf of Bothnia.

A 'Liberty' type was traded as Belfri, and two tankers of 19,000 dwt and 15,350 dwt were completed in 1955 and 1958 as Belfast by the Glasgow yard of Harland & Wolff Ltd. and Belstar by the Fredriksstad yard. Belkarin and Belevelyn, the last Christen Smith heavy lifters, were sold out of the fleet on the same day of 13th March 1972 to Cypriot owners and renamed Elbella and Elkina respectively, with Belkarin sinking in Suez Bay on 19th March 1978 while on a voyage from Jordan to Holland under the name of Nahost Jumbo. Belevelyn was beached at Gadani Beach on 8th February 1982 for breaking up under the name of Asar. Conventional cargo-liners took over their roles as they were fitted with Stulken jumbo heavy lift derricks of up to 200 tons capacity, and thus Belships had to diversify into bulk carriers and other types of ship. The heavy lift era of Christen Smith had lasted for 52 years from 1920 to 1972.

INVESTMENT IN REEFERS AND BULK CARRIERS

The reefer Belnippon of 6,300 grt was completed in 1964 with a high service speed of twenty knots and 270,000 cubic feet of refrigerated space in her four holds was completed by the Oresund and Gotaverken yard in Sweden in 1964, and she had a sister, Pacific Express. General cargo ships with engines aft had also been built for the Belships fleet in post-war years, the first was the engines aft bridge 'midships Belevelyn of 7,850 dwt launched on 8th June 1948 at South Shields by John Readhead & Sons Ltd. and completed three months later. She had a service speed of 12.5 knots from a four cylinder steam engine and was sold after only six years trading by Belships. She was of a new design known as a 'strengthened raised quarter decker', which featured a five hold engines aft design ideally suited for the grain and sugar trades. Rookwood, Rushwood and Granwood followed for William France, Fenwick, Hudson Deep and Hudson Point for the Hudson Steamship Co. Ltd., and Camellia, Cydonia, Gloxinia and Photinia for Stag Line Ltd. of North Shields.

Bellevelyn was followed by the shelter decker Bellully of 13,400 dwt in 1957, single deckers Belvera of 14,800 dwt and Belnor of 15,000 dwt in 1959, and later by the bulkers Belisland of 15,300 dwt in 1963 from Harland & Wolff, Belmaj of 50,210 dwt from the Oresundsvarvet yard in 1964, Belcargo and Belocean of 17,700 dwt from the Frederiksstad yard during 1966/69, Belblue of 18,420 dwt in 1968 by the Bremer Vulkan yard at Vegesack, and the bulkers Belnor and Belstar of 38,400 dwt in 1971/72 from the Fredriksstad yard.

The nine hold bulker Belcargo of 108,700 dwt and overall length of 871.5 feet was completed in 1975 by the Fredriksstad yard and often loaded iron ore at Sepetiba Terminal in Brazil, Puerto Bolivar in Colombia, or Monrovia for Rotterdam, or alternately loaded coal at Richards Bay for Hong Kong. The nine hold ore/oil carrier Belobo of 78,078 dwt in 1974 was delivered from the Bremer Vulkan yard and had two sisters in Ringobo and Obo Duke, and also loaded iron ore at Monrovia for Rotterdam. There were other Handysize bulkers in the 35,000 dwt to 40,000 dwt joined the Belships fleet to operate worldwide. The OPEC price rise of one third in bunker oil fuel adversely affected the company greatly, with newbuildings cancelled, brand new ships laid up until sold at a loss or broken up. The giant ULCC tanker Belfri of 311,440 dwt was completed in 1975 by Bremer Vulkan, and was chartered for five years and then laid up and sold for breaking up in 1983 after a very short career.

The Open Hatch Gantry Crane (OHGC) forestry and log carriers Belforest, Beltimber and Belwood of 39,850 dwt joined the fleet in 1985 from the Tsuneishi yard in Japan, and containers could also be carried on deck by this trio. Belforest loaded a full cargo of wood products topped off with containers at Coos Bay in Oregon in May 1990, and sailed for Ghent with arrival in June, and then loaded steel at Newport, Brake and Antwerp and sailed in the first week of July for several ports of discharge in California, and then ballasted back to British Columbia for another cargo of forestry products. This trio also loaded forestry products in the Columbia River, at Harmac near Nanaimo on Vancouver Island, New Westminster City and Vancouver, or traded Transpacific from these ports to Tokyo.

The Western Bulk Carriers pool of up to eighty Handysize and Handymax bulk carriers was established by Belships and four other shipowners in 1982 to handle contracts of affreightment, with Western Bulk Shipping (WBS) set up in 1991 with Belships having 46%, Belstove 33% and Kvaerner 31% of the shares through a transfer of their holdings in Western Bulk Carriers. However, a conflict with the other shareholders in the pool ended with Belships exiting WBS at the end of 1999. WBS was listed on the Oslo Bors in 1993 after a public offering brought in 300 million in Norwegian kroner. Western Bell of 37,800 dwt, Belstar of 43,400 dwt and Belnor of 47,400 dwt were new bulkers that joined the owned and operated Belships fleet between 1992 and 1996, with second hand Belisland of 42,083 dwt purchased in 1990.

In 1995, the operating income of Belships was 4.23 million Norwegian kroner, up 47% from the previous year and up 64% from 1993 due to very favourable freight rates in 1995. Three Handymax bulkers were owned by Belships operating in the Western Bulk Shipping (WBS) pool, with Belship Tankers operating four owned and five chartered Handysize product tankers, while Belships Trading operated chartered Panamax bulker tonnage carrying coal, ores and grain worldwide. A diversification with a 10.4% stake in Pelican Oil, which produced oil and gas on the Ula and Gyda fields in the North Sea, was made at this time.

Several bulkers and ore/oil carriers were then purchased from WBS and given traditional Belships names e.g. Belgallantry (ex Western Gallantry), Belgreeting (ex Western Greeting), Belguardian (ex Western Guardian) of 43,500 dwt. The larger bulker Belmaj of 149,500 dwt was purchased in 1997, but had been built in China in 1990, and carried iron ore on long term charter from Ponta do Ubu, to the south of Vitoria (Brazil), to Beilun in China. Four product tankers of 40,000 dwt were traded as Belgrace, Beltrader, Belanina and Belanja, while the crude oil tanker Magnolia of 84,656 dwt traded from the Persian Gulf oilfields. The acquisition of the small LPG gas tanker arm of George Gibson Ltd. of Leith in 1996 was unsuccessful as no profits were made, and was sold off in 2003.

In August 1999, towards the end of the 23.5% stake and involvement of Belships with the Western Bulk Shipping ASA pool, the owned and operated ships were on the following voyages:-

Belgallantry (obo) *Keelung to Bahrain*
Belgreeting (obo) *Mesaieed to Singapore*
Belguardian (obo) *Fujairah to Khor Fakkan*
Belgrace (tanker) *Singapore to Fujairah*
Belmaj *Ponta do Ubu to Beilun (China)*
Belnor *Singapore to Suez*
Belstar *Paradip (India) to Visakhapatnam*
Western Friend *Hamburg to Singapore*
Western Iris *Baltimore to Tyne*
Western Island *Rosario to New York*
Western Obelisk *Vancouver to Melbourne*
Western Olivin *Haldia to Ko Sichang*
Western Ondina *Porto Vesme to Casablanca*
Western Onyx *Tampa to Newcastle (NSW)*
Western Opal *Mina Saqr (UAE) to Durban*
Western Orion *Cadiz to Gdansk*
Western Rams *New Orleans to Vanncouver*
Western Team *Odessa to Bangkok*
Western Tide *Hay Point to Visakhapatnam*
Western Tiger *Brisbane to Columbia River*
Western Transporter *Almeria to Panama City (Alabama)*
Western Trust *Vancouver to Newcastle (NSW)*

SUPRAMAX and ULTRAMAX BULK CARRIERS

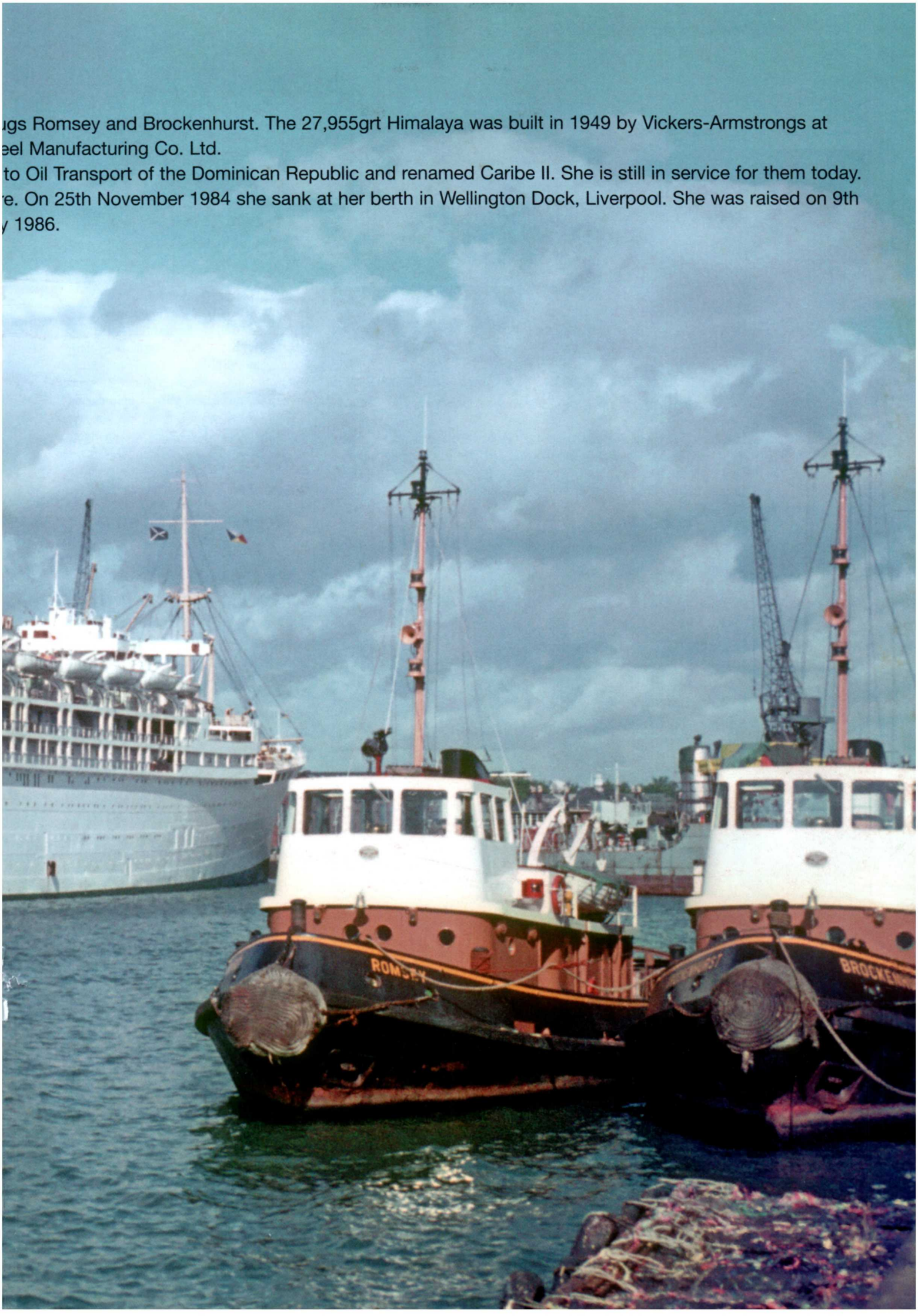
Dry bulk freight rates reached all time highs during the two years of 2003 and 2004 and record profits were made by the company, with Belships acquiring 50% of the Elkem Chartering pool of bulkers. Funnel colours were now blue with a blue 'S' inside a 'C' above a blue anchor with a narrow blue ring on a white disc. Hull colours were blue, grey or red with red boot topping. These funnel colours were worn by the new bulkers

PHOTO OF THE MONTH

A scene from Southampton in October 1967 showing the P&O liner Himalaya and the Alexandra Towing
Barrow-in-Furness. On 30th November 1974 she arrived at Kaohsiung to be broken up by Tong Cheng
The 173grt Romsey was built in 1964 by Richard Dunston Ltd. at Hessle, Yorkshire. In 1990 she was so
Her twin sister the 173grt Brockenhurst was also built in 1964 by Richard Dunston Ltd. at Hessle, Yorks
December and sold to Sammy Evans and Sons at Garston to be broken up, arriving there on 28th Janu

Photo: Nigel Lawrence

ugs Romsey and Brockenhurst. The 27,955grt Himalaya was built in 1949 by Vickers-Armstrongs at
eel Manufacturing Co. Ltd.
to Oil Transport of the Dominican Republic and renamed Caribe II. She is still in service for them today.
e. On 25th November 1984 she sank at her berth in Wellington Dock, Liverpool. She was raised on 9th
y 1986.



Above: The 109,600dwt bulk carrier Belcargo was built in 1975 by Frederiksstad MV. On 1st May 1994 she arrived at Shanghai to be broken up. *(FotoFlite)*

Below: The 45,526dwt bulk carrier Western Friend was built in 1982 by Tsuneishi at Numakuma as the Stove Friend for Rederi A/B Dalen. She became Western Friend in 1985. In 2001 she was sold to Chios Luck Shipping & Trading and renamed Chios Luck. In 2004 she moved to Sheffield Maritime Corporation as Manhattan Princess, then on 22nd November 2011 she arrived at Alang to be broken up by Dalkan Shipbreaking. *(FotoFlite)*

Bottom: The 43,467dwt OBO Belgallantry was built in 1987 by Tsuneishi at Numakuma as the Western Gallantry. She became Belgallantry in 1996. In 2002 after briefly sailing as Siri Phatra, she joined Chemikalien Seetransport as Gang Hai 676 and in 2006 she moved to China Changhang Freight Co. as Xiu Hai. On 25th April 2020 she arrived at Jiangyin to be broken up. *(FotoFlite)*

Belisland of 76,662 dwt completed in 2003, and by Belaia of 48,675 dwt completed in 2007 and other new Belships bulkers. Operating income hit $51 million in 2006 in boom freight rates.

However, the world financial turmoil triggered by bank system crashes during 2008/09 struck the company, which badly affected the bottom line profits, with the acquisition of six bulkers stopped at a considerable loss in finance for the cancellations. In 2012, Belships had a fleet of 19 ships in 2012, with sisters Belnor, Belstar and Belocean of 58,000 dwt all on charter to Canpotex of Canada for ten years, the largest exporter of potash in the world, particularly to the under developed countries in Africa as well as to China, Brazil and India. The charter rates for this trio of bulkers built during 2009/11 by Yangzhou Dayang in China averaged $16,000 per day. Belaia was chartered to J. Lauritzen A/S until March 2014 at a net rate of £12,840 per day, and technical management of the Belships fleet was handled by Belships (Management) Pte of Singapore.

A contract was signed in 2013 with the Imabari Shipbuilding yard in Japan for two Ultramax bulkers pf 61,000 dwt for delivery in the second half of 2015. They were delivered as Belforest on charter to Cargill for one year at $8,000 per day, and as Belisland on charter to Canpotex. Belocean also continued her charter to Canpotex. A third purchase option was taken up in 2014 with the Imabari Shipbuilding yard for delivery in the first quarter of 2017. The Belships fleet in 2014 comprised twenty bulkers with the company having exited the product tanker sector to concentrate entirely on Supramax and Untramax bulkers. Belocean was dry-docked for special survey in China during September 2015, and was off hire for three weeks.

A Belships fleet of twenty bulkers was being traded in 2016, with both Belocean and Belforest re-hired without significant loss of earnings after coming off hire. One Ultramax bulker of 63,000 dwt was ordered from the Imabari Shipbuilding yard in Japan for delivery in January 2018, and another from the same yard was scheduled for delivery in the first half of 2020. The Handysize bulker Super Challenge of 28,581 dwt was on time charter during 2016 to Belships Tianjin Shipmanagement. Seven year bareboat charters were agreed in 2017 for two Ultramax bulkers of 61,000 dwt to be delivered by a Japanese yard during the fourth quarter of 2019 and first quarter of 2020.

During the Belships centenary year of 2018, Belnippon was delivered in January 2018 on time charter to Cargill for one year, and both Belocean and Belforest were off hire at the end of 2018, but soon found new employment. After divesting of its 50% stake in Elchem Chartering pool with thirteen Handymax bulkers on time charter, Belships gained a 50% stake in Lighthouse Navigation

(LHN) of Bangkok in December 2018 to increase the size of its fleet of Supramax and Ultramax bulkers to two dozen ships. LHN has offered customised services for dry bulk charterers since 2009 on Handysize and Supramax bulkers transporting steel, rice, agricultural products, fertilisers as well as breakbulk cargoes. The LHN merger also saw the end of an 80 year association in the management of the Belships fleet by the Lorentzen family since 1937, with generations of brothers, their children and grandchildren, having been key owners, managers and executives of Belships.

In 2019, an Ultramax bulker of 64,000 dwt was ordered from a Japanese yard for delivery during the second half of 2021. Belcargo (ex Viola) was purchased in May 2019 from Wenaas Shipping A/S for $13.0 million, Belfri (ex Sephora) was purchased from Prospero Maritime Ltd. for $12.0 million, and Sofie Victory was purchased in July 2019 for $24.15 million, and retained her name. Average 'spot' earnings in 2019 were running at $9,587 per day, while average charter rates were $11,360 per day. Belsouth was fixed to Western Bulk Chartering for nine months at $11,950 per day, while Belstar, Belnor and Belisland continued on charter to Canpotex, and Belforest, Belocean and Belnippon continued on charter to Cargill.

During 2020, a fleet of 23 Supramax and Ultramax bulkers was being traded, with seven Supramaxes named Belocean, Belnor, Belstar, Balcargo, Belorient, Belfort and Belfri, and sixteen Ultramaxes named Belmar, Belfast, Belfuji, Belaja, Belmoira, Belray, Belnippon, Belhaven, Belisland, Belforest, Belinda, Belmont, Belatlantic, Belpareil, Belsouth and Sofie Victory. Belray arrived in ballast in the Tyne on 4th August 2020, and loaded a scrap metal cargo and sailed for Wilmington (NC) on 9th August, arriving on 22nd August 2020. All of the Belships fleet are geared bulkers with four grey painted cranes suitable for lifting and discharging steel pipes, wind turbine components and project cargo in ports without cranes and infrastructure.

Belships Shipmanagement began in 1983 as NorthSouth Shipmanagement (Pty) Ltd. in Singapore for management, consultancy, project management, newbuild supervision, sale and purchase transactions, ballast water treatment advice and scrubber fitting advice. This became Belships Singapore Shipmanagement office in 1993, the Shanghai office was opened in 2001, and the Philippines office was opened in 2006. Belships crews are recruited from manning offices in Tianjin (China), Myanmar (Burma) and the Philippines. Belships Head Office and financial management remains in Oslo, with commercial operations also run from Bangkok, and technical management of this big fleet is done from Singapore and Shanghai.

Above: The 47,369dwt bulk carrier Belnor was built in 1996 by Oshima Shipbuilding. In 2007 she was sold to Songa Shipping and renamed Songa Nor and in 2011 she became Jahan Sisters of Jahan Marine of Bangladesh. She is in the present fleet. *(FotoFlite)*

Below: The 57,970dwt bulk carrier Belstar was built in 2009 by Yangzhou Dayang at Yangzhou, Jiangsu. She is in Belships present fleet. She is seen here in Gibraltar in December 2018. *(Nigel Lawrence)*

Bottom: The 57,970dwt bulk carrier Belnor was built in 2010 by Yangzhou Dayang at Yangzhou, Jiangsu. She is in Belships present fleet. *(Belships)*

Above: The 58,018dwt bulk carrier Belocean was built in 2011 by Yangzhou Dayang at Yangzhou, Jiangsu. She is in Belships present fleet.
Below: The 61,379dwt bulk carrier Belray was built in 2019 by Shin Kurushima at Toyohashi. She is in the present fleet.
Bottom: The 61,346dwt bulk carrier Belmoira was built in 2020 by Shin Kurushima at Toyohashi. She is in the present fleet.

(All photos courtesy of Belships)

Lars Christian Skarsgard has been CEO of Belships since 13th March 2019, and joined the company after a wealth of experience with Fearnleys A/S of Oslo in a career spanning deck cadet, shipbroker, ship manager and shipowner. Belships also has a Chairman and six directors including Sverre J. Tidemand, who took full control in 2010 of Sonata Holdings, the majority shareholder of Belships.

Belpareil was dry-docked in February 2020, with refits and special surveys only done once in five years due to the special anti-corrosion properties of the underwater hull paints supplied by International Paints Ltd. of Gateshead. The amount of cargo carried in the first quarter of 2020 had increased over the same period of 2019, and has continued to increase year on year for the last five years. However, the second quarter results were weak as both 'spot' and charter rates were down due to the COVID-19 virus pandemic. The average age of this big fleet is five years with several Supramax and Ultramax bulkers bareboat chartered for seven years. Belships shares with the ticker symbol of 'BEL' were trading in June 2021 on the Oslo Bors at 12.6 Norwegian kroner per share.

POSTSCRIPT

Capt. Christen Smith set up his new shipping company in 1918, but his first two ships delivered in 1920/21 had to be radically altered from their original purpose to become the first pioneer heavy lift ships in the world. During the inter-war years, Belships was the leading heavy lift company in the world with heavy lifts of locomotives, tenders, carriages, barges, tugs, lightships and oil refinery components transported to countries in Africa, Asia and South America. During the late 1940s and the decade of the 1950s, Belships ordered several new heavy lift ships with demand boosted by the Korean War. This remarkable shipping company was often in the media of the day in newspapers and on the cinema for its heavy lifting, and has survived to trade into a second century of operations.

However, the sector suffered very heavy competition from cargo-liners with heavy lift Stulken derricks of up to 250 ton capacity, and the last Belships heavy lifter was sold in 1972. The company then diversified into crude and product tankers, ore/oil carriers, reefers, and bulkers from the late 1950s, in a process that has continued unabated ever since and has proven most successful financially with operating revenue at an all time high. The Supramax and Ultramax fleet of Belships bulkers trade worldwide, particularly to North America, Europe, West Africa, Australia, and to the Far East ports in South East Asia, Singapore, Philippines and China.

I wish the company well in the future and also sincerely thank the excellent website of Belships at www.belships.com.

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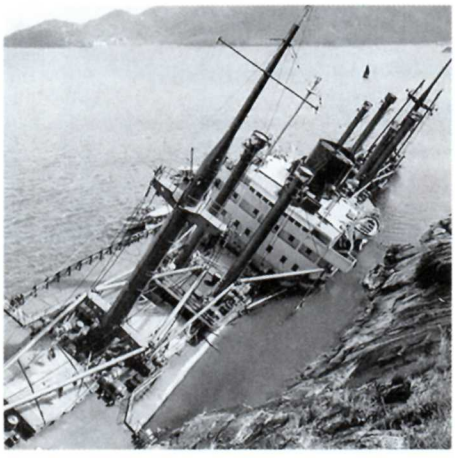
The Victims of Hong Kong's Typhoons - 1960s-1980s

Every year some of the world's most horrific storms form over the Pacific Ocean before moving across the Philippines and then reforming in the South China Sea and making a devastating landfall on the coast of southern China. Measuring hundreds of kilometres in diameter, these meteorological super storms can create immense amounts of rain and with severe winds of up to 260 kilometers an hour. Over many decades Hong Kong has learned to adapt and prepare to cope with these typhoons, but the city still comes to a total halt when these significant winds arrive. The Typhoon Season in Hong Kong usually spans the months of May to October, with July, August and September being the most prolific months for Typhoons.

SEVERE TYPHOON GLORIA 1957

Severe Typhoon Gloria formed to the east of Luzon in the western Pacific Ocean and tracked across the northern Philippines, intensifying as it progressed across the China Sea towards the Chinese mainland. On 22nd September 1957 the Royal Observatory in Hong Kong upgraded it to a 'Severe Typhoon' just prior to the system making landfall. It had a devastating effect on the infrastructure of Hong Kong.



In September 1957 Typhoon Gloria hit Hong Kong causing massive damage and many marine casualties, one of which was the grounding of the 8,249grt Dutch Cargo Liner **Tjibantjet** on the rocks near Lye Yei Mun (Devil's Peak area) at the eastern entrance to Hong Kong Harbour (above). The ship had recently completed a voyage from Moji to Hong Kong prior to her being stranded during Typhoon Gloria. The **Tjibantjet** lost both her anchors near Junk Bay during the Typhoon, and grounded heavily. She was successfully refloated in June 1958 and resumed service with her owners, Royal Interocean Lines, in May 1959 after substantial repairs. Following another 14 years of service, she finally met her demise in December 1973 when she was sent to Taiwan for demolition.

TYPHOON MARY 1960

Typhoon Mary arrived on 8th June 1960 and was the worst Typhoon to hit Hong Kong in more than 20 years. Tremendous rainfall (more than 14 inches in 24 hours) together with winds of 119 kmh (64 knots), gusting to 194 kmh (105 knots) at times, recorded at Waglan Island, which gave it the infamous nick name 'Bloody Mary', a name which will go down in the history of Hong Kong

Typhoon Mary, also known as 'Bloody Mary' was an extremely damaging Typhoon in 1960. It began as a deep trough in the South China Sea. A tropical depression formed on 2nd June. It became a tropical storm on the next day, and received the name Mary. It slowly moved across the sea, strengthening to a typhoon. Mary made landfall in Hong Kong on 8th June, then transitted inland through Guangdong and Fujian provinces on the Chinese mainland. It re-emerged back to sea north of Taiwan and moved in the direction of the Pacific Ocean, south of Japan, where it once again strengthened into a Typhoon temporarily, before weakening and becoming downgraded on 12th June.

The 7,219grt Italian Liberty ship **San Francesco** (above), ex Samsylvan, sank in Hong Kong during the Typhoon. She was refloated but subsequently scrapped.

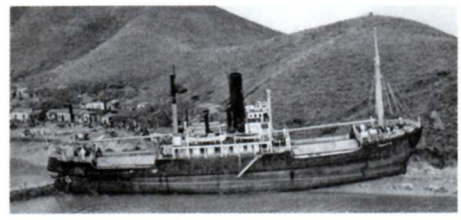
The 3,059grt Hong Kong registered cargo ship **Shun Lee** was driven aground on one of the Pratas Islands in the South China Sea and was wrecked. Her crew abandoned the vessel and took to the lifeboats.

TYPHOON WANDA 1962

During the 1960s one of the most serious Typhoons to hit Hong Kong was Typhoon Wanda in September 1962. Not only was substantial damage sustained to the colony's infrastructure but some 36 ocean going vessels were either driven aground or wrecked in the devastation in locations right across the then colony of Hong Kong. The deep, landlocked indentation of Tolo Harbour and Plover Cove, flanked by high hills that protect the snug anchorage from Typhoons, remained a favoured haven for ships in Hong Kong. Located in the NE sector of Hong Kong's New Territories, it is usually available for vessels drawing up to 8m draft. Unfortunately, the topography of the area did not always offer the protection sought from the weather, resulting in numerous Typhoon casualties. Some of which are captured below.

The Hong Kong managed, Panama regitered, 5,083grt **Ocean Venture** (ex Blairclova, Sutherland) was wrecked at Tolo Harbour as a consequence of Typhoon Wanda.

The 7,176grt Panamanian registered former Liberty Ship **Crescent** was wrecked in Hong Kong at Tolo Harbour (above).



The 1,267grt cargo ship **Hai Jye** hard aground at the east end of Harbour Island, Plover Cove (above).

Despite being considered a safe haven, regrettably not so for the 7,062grt **Fortune Lory** (ex Stanrealm). Pictured well and truly wrecked (above), again as a result of Typhoon Wanda in 1962

TYPHOON RUBY 1964

1964 was the most active year on record for the Pacific Typhoon season with 39 storms recorded. Typhoon Ruby was the 2nd worst Typhoon ever to hit Hong Kong. This storm formed north east of Luzon, in the Philippines, on 1st September. It tracked westward across the China Sea, rapidly intensifying as it progressed and was finally categorized as level 4 on the Typhoon scale. It struck Hong Kong on 1st September, with winds peaking at 140 mph (230 kmh) causing catastrophic damage to infrastructure and shipping.

Pictured above high and dry, the 7,150grt Hong Kong managed 'Park' vessel **Vinkon** (ex Champlain Park) in Tolo Harbour. At low water one could walk right around the vessel. A bird's eye view for passengers on passing trains!

TYPHOON ROSE 1971

The commencement of a new decade saw Typhoon Rose striking Hong Kong on 17th August 1971. Initially, this was classified as an area of unsettled weather to the west of Guam, later intensifying to a Typhoon on 10th August, before being downgraded to a tropical storm. Having again re-intesified, after only a few hours, it was again classified as a Typhoon and named Rose. The Typhoon then tracked west north westerly towards the Philippines, crossing northern Luzon where it weakened and moved into the South China Sea. The storm gained intensity as it progressed across the waters of the open sea and finally struck Hong Kong on 17th August with winds reaching 278 kmh (173 mph) at Tai Mo Shan in the central New Territories. Typhoon Rose was the most violent and intense tropical cyclone to strike Hong Kong since Typhoon Wanda in 1962. The huge storm surge, coupled with heavy seas proved disastrous to many ships offshore, at least 300 boats sank or were badly damaged by the typhoon and 88 deaths alone occurred after the Hong Kong-Macau Ferry **Fatshan** capsized and sank. Damage to infrastructure was massive throughout the Colony.

A dramatic image above of the 7,606grt **USS Regulus** (ex Escanaba Victory) firmly aground on 17th August during Typhoon Rose, at Kau I Chau Island. The grounding caused massive hull damage to the ship and after 3 weeks attempting to salvage her it became obvious it was unviable and she was declared a total loss, subsequently being struck from the USN list. The vessel was progressively demolished in situ.

SUPER TYPHOON HOPE 1979

This weather system formed a tropical depression south east of Guam on 24th July. After a period of uncertainty the storm regenerated on 28th, reaching Typhoon status on 29th. The storm was allocated the name Typhoon Hope, and tracked west north west passing through the Luzon Straits, south of Taiwan, and making landfall only 10 miles to the east of Hong Kong on 2nd August. This was to become the Colony's most devastating Typhoon since Typhoon Rose in 1971. Winds were recorded in Hong Kong at 205 kmh (125 mph), gusting to 240kmh (150 mph). The Typhoon caused havoc and was responsible for 112 fatalities and 260 injuries. Typhoon Hope quickly weakened over the land while moving westward, but retained its classic formation. Once over the Bay of Bengal the storm re-intensified and moved over India where it finally dissipated.

During Typhoon Hope one of Kowloon's two Star Ferry piers in Tsim Sha Tsui, was seriously damaged when the powerless 10,335grt Greek freighter **Argonaut** (ex Hazelbank) collided with the piers (above). Reportedly the ship lost its anchors and despite desperate efforts by the crew to avoid the Star Ferry piers, they were unsuccessful in their endeavour. The ship eventually came to rest hard up against Kowloon Public Pier, having sustained serious hull damage on her port side.

SUPER TYPHOON ELLEN 1983

Typhoon Ellen was considered the worst typhoon to hit the China Coast since Typhoon Hope in 1979. This Tropical Cyclone formed well out into the Pacific Ocean on 26th August 1983. It strengthened and was upgraded to Typhoon status on 4th September as it tracked west-northwest when it became known as Typhoon Ellen.
Upon making landfall in what is now present-day China, winds gusted to 154 kmh (96 mph) at Stanley. Rainfall totaled 231.8 mm (9.13 in) according to Hong Kong's Royal Observatory. Twenty-two ships were wrecked, including the 9,539gt freighter **Golden Fortune** (ex Strathinver, Galway), forcing the rescue of all 40 crew members. Several less serious collisions were reported between ships.

Another casualty was the 225grt barque. **Osprey** which carried 9 people, 8 of which were lost. The sailing vessel (made famous due to the Jackie Chan movie - Project A) had been at anchor in Repulse Bay on the southern side of Hong Kong Island, when the Typhoon was approaching Hong Kong. Apparently, according to reports, the vessel weighed anchor sometime in the early hours of 9th September, presumably heading into more open water. After that, little is known except she was presumed to have sunk with the loss of 11 lives, 12 miles somewhere to the south of Hong Kong Island.

The 6,256grt Cypriot freighter **City of Lobito** (ex Lagos Palm) well and truly beached on Chung Chau Island as a consequence of Typhoon Ellen (above). The Filipino crew were rescued and cared for by local villagers until the storm had subsided and they were repatriated. The owners of the vessel were reported as having ceased operating soon thereafter.

This short summary by no means includes all the Typhoons experienced during the period covered or marine casualties sustained, but is only a random selection of some that made the headlines. Perhaps this will give an insight into some of the devastation these super storms can create, perhaps nostalgia for others, who may have experienced them.

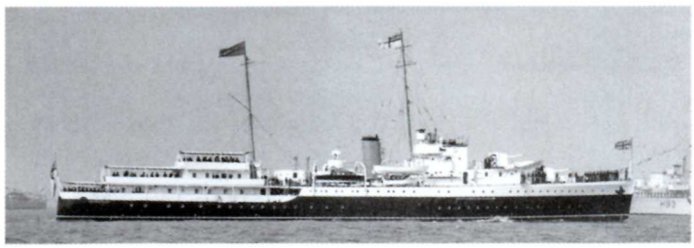
Over many years the major Hong Kong shipyards obtained much business from ships becoming stranded by Typhoons sustaining damage as a result of grounding in and around Hong Kong's waters, as well as other vessels salvaged in the South China Sea by the iconic tug **Taikoo** operated by the China Navigation Company on behalf of the Swire Group's Taikoo Shipyard.

Similarly, the Hong Kong Kowloon and Whampoa Dock Company, known for short as Whampoa Dock, situated in the Hung Hom area of Kowloon peninsula also thrived as a consequence. The Whampoa Dock operations merged with Swire's Taikoo Dockyard to become Hong Kong United Dockyard on the new territories western shore of Tsing Yi Island, Wok Tai Wan.

FEATURE BY IAN RICHARDSON

AN ENCHANTING STORY

HMS Enchantress was laid down in 1934 as HMS Bittern, the prototype for a new class of sloop, the Bittern Class. However she was renamed prior to launch and completed to serve as an Admiralty Yacht for the use of the Board of Admiralty, when the Royal Navy could afford such a luxury. Although retaining her original armament of two single 4.7 inch guns forward and one amidships the after part was fitted with accommodation and offices to enable her to carry out her new role.



Enchantress (above) was painted with a black hull, green boot topping, white superstructure and buff coloured funnel. She was used extensively by Admirals normally based ashore, the Board of the Admiralty and to supplement the Royal Yacht. She was present at the 1935 Silver Jubilee Fleet Review and the 1937 Coronation Review.

The vessel reverted to her role as a sloop upon the outbreak of war in 1939 and her opulent fittings and some accommodation was gradually removed as the conflict progressed (above).

HMS Enchantress served with distinction throughout the war, gaining Battle Honours, Atlantic 1939-45, Mediterranean 1942 and North Africa 1942-43.

Whilst based at Gibraltar in 1942 she took part in the sinking of the Italian submarine Corallo in December of that year. Enchantress eventually rammed and sank the boat when it was blown to the surface. The damage sustained necessitated temporary repairs at Oran before more permanent repairs at Grimsby. She did not return to service until June 1943.

In 1945 she was allocated to the Eastern Fleet, but had only reached Colombo by the time the Japanese had surrendered. She left Sydney, New South Wales for the UK on the 27th December 1945 arriving at Portsmouth in March 1946 and was destored and laid up pending disposal.

On the 22nd October 1946, Enchantress was sold to the Three Star Shipping Co. Ltd. for £22,500 and taken to the yard of J.I. Thornycroft at Southampton for rebuilding as an excursion vessel.

Renamed Lady Enchantress she was fitted with a larger funnel, the bridge and shelter decks were extended aft and she was fitted with six (three either side) large lifeboats, which dominated the profile of the ship. However the cost of the conversion escalated with a subsequent delay in entering service.

Her initial sailing did not take place until 4th August 1947. The schedule for the ship was to sail from Gravesend to Margate followed by a cross channel cruise off the Dunkirk beaches on Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sundays. On Monday and Wednesday the vessel carried out a cruise around the Goodwin Lightship. She remained in port on Friday for maintenance and to rest the crew.

Often carrying maximum capacity Lady Enchantress made thirty-three excursion trips, undercutting the rival General Steam Navigation vessels.

At the end of the 1947 season she was laid up on the Thames after being found to be uneconomical to operate. It was not until the 27th July 1949 that she was towed to Dartmouth for charter, which did not materialise, and the vessel was laid up there until early 1950.

Following a short refit at White's yard at Southampton she commenced a service on the 2nd July 1950 to the Channel Islands. Lady Enchantress sailed from Torquay to Guernsey on Monday and Friday, to Falmouth on Tuesday, to Guernsey via Plymouth on Wednesday and to Weymouth and Bournemouth on Thursday. On a Sunday she cruised off the Normandy Invasion Beaches.

Mechanical problems were a constant cause for concern, and her sailings often suffered from delays and cancellation. However the vessel was well patronised and often carried 400-500 passengers on each excursion.

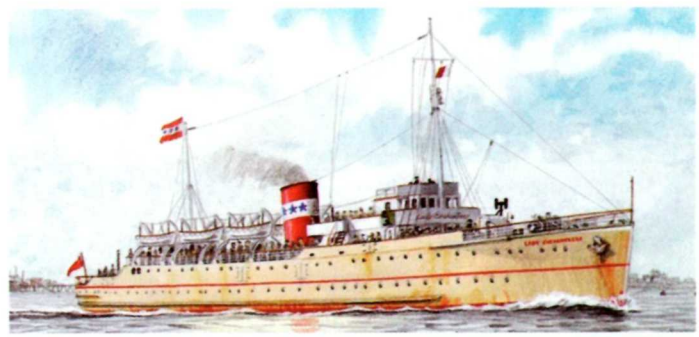
On Wednesday 30th August 1950 Lady Enchantress sailed from Guernsey for the return trip to Torquay. However about 20 miles out of St. Peter Port the brick work in the forward boiler collapsed followed by the failure of the aft boiler. The ship lost all power and began drifting toward the Casquet Rocks, about 15 miles away.

The ocean going tug Turmoil arrived at the scene at 6.30 the following morning and towed the ship back to Torquay where she anchored. Her passengers were taken ashore by the local excursion vessel Kiloran.

Lady Enchantress was towed to Southampton by Turmoil, where repairs were undertaken and the ship offered for sale. Although there were a number of prospective purchasers, none felt the vessel was a viable proposition.

She remained laid up until February 1952 when she was towed to the breakers yard of Clayton and Davie to be broken up at Dunston on the south bank of the Tyne, arriving there on 16th February 1952.

So ended the short career of Lady Enchantress, which failed when it was the heyday for other excursion vessels operating off the South Coast and from the Thames.



HMS Enchantress was built by John Brown & Co. Ltd. on the Clyde. She was laid down on the 9th March 1934, launched on the 21st December 1934 and completed on the 4th April 1935, being Yard No. 540. She displaced 1,085 tons had a length of 282 feet, a beam of 37 feet and a draught of 10 feet at full load. Machinery consisted of two shaft-geared turbines delivering 3,300 shp with a speed of 18.75 knots. Armament consisted of 3 single 4.7-inch guns. During the war she received a single 3 inch anti aircraft guns and further smaller anti aircraft weapons. An anti-submarine 'Hedgehog' ahead throwing mortar was fitted in 1942. The vessel carried a complement of about 125. As Lady Enchantress (above) she had a gross tonnage of 1,473 and a passenger capacity of 1,010.

80 YEARS AGO

Significant British Merchant Ships lost in August 1941

Date	Name	Built	GRT	Owners	Position	Lives lost
1	Kwaibo	1928	396	Elder Dempster Lines	Wrecked at Eket Bar	
1	Trident	1917	4,317	Connell & Grace	Bombed and sunk at the mouth of the Tyne	
4	Robert Max	1920	172	Grand Bank Fisheries	Sunk by gunfire from U-126 off Portugal	
4	Tunisia	1927	4,337	Strick Line	Bombed and sunk 350nm W of Achill Head, Co. Mayo	38
5	Belgravian	1937	3,136	Ellerman Lines	Torpedoed (U-372) W of Ireland	2
5	Cape Rodney	1940	4,512	Lyle Shipping	Torpedoed (U-75) in N Atlantic	
5	Harlingen	1933	5,415	J. & C. Harrison	Torpedoed (U-74) W of Ireland	2
5	Kumasian	1935	4,922	Palm Line	Torpedoed (U-74) W of Ireland	1
5	Swiftpool	1929	5,205	Sir R. Ropner	Torpedoed (U-372) W of Ireland	42
6	Aberhill	1915	1,516	Mathew Taylor	Wrecked on Haisborough Sands, Norfolk	
6	Afon Towy	1919	684	W. Coombs & Sons	Wrecked on Haisborough Sands, Norfolk	9
6	Betty Hindley	1941	1,738	Stephenson Clarke	Wrecked on Haisborough Sands, Norfolk	
6	Deerwood	1919	1,914	France, Fenwick & Co.	Wrecked on Haisborough Sands, Norfolk	2
6	Gallois	1917	2,684	Ministry of War Transport	Wrecked on Haisborough Sands, Norfolk	
6	Oxshott	1915	1,241	Hudson SS Co.	Wrecked on Haisborough Sands, Norfolk	5
6	Taara	1907	1,402	Ministry of War Transport	Wrecked on Haisborough Sands, Norfolk	
8	Cordene	1924	2,345	Wm. Cory & Son	Bombed and sunk off Cromer	
9	Ocean Victor	1918	202	John Craig	Torpedoed (U-206) 100nm SE of Iceland	13
10	Sir Russell	1933	1,548	Stephenson Clarke	Torpedoed (S-49) 6nm ENE of Dungeness	
11	Empire Hurst	1941	2,852	Ministry of War Transport	Bombed and sunk 400nm W of Gibraltar	26
14	Australind	1929	5,020	Trinder, Anderson & Co.	Sunk by German raider Komet off Galapagos Islands	3
19	Aguila	1917	3,255	Yeoward Line	Torpedoed (U-201) SW of Ireland	152
19	Alva	1934	1,584	Glen & Co.	Torpedoed (U-559) 600nm W of Ushant	13
19	Ciscar	1919	2,436	MacAndrew & Co.	Torpedoed (U-201) SW of Fastnet	13
19	Devon	1915	9,016	British India SN Co.	Sunk by German raider Komet 200nm S of Galapagos Islands	7
19	Golden Grain	1934	102	E. Marriage & Son	Mined in River Thames	3
20	Juliiet	1906	173	Crescent Trawlers	Bombed and sunk 30nm S of Old Head of Kinsale	
22	Empire Oak	1941	484	United Towing	Torpedoed (U-564) off Portugal	19
23	Aldergrove	1918	1,974	Grove Line	Torpedoed (U-201) off Portugal	1
23	Stork	1937	787	General Steam Nav. Co.	Torpedoed (U-201) off Portugal	19
24	Skagerak	1921	1,283	Ministry of War Transport	Mined in River Orwell	18
27	Embassage	1935	4,954	Hall Bros.	Torpedoed (U-557) W of Achill Island, Co. Mayo	39
27	Ladylove	1903	230	Hewett Fishing Co.	Torpedoed (U-202) S of Iceland	14
27	Saugor	1928	6,303	Nourse Line	Torpedoed (U-557) W of Achill Island, Co. Mayo	
27	Tremoda	1928	4,736	Hain SS Co.	Torpedoed (U-557) W of Achill Island, Co. Mayo	32
28	Otaio	1930	10,298	New Zealand Shipping Co.	Torpedoed (U-588) 330nm NW of Fastnet	13

The Afon Towy was one of several vessel lost at Haisborough Sands on 6th August after the escort of convoy FS-559 led the ships astray in bad weather.

The largest loss of life in August was 152 who perished aboard the Aguila while en route from Liverpool for Gibraltar and Lisbon in Convoy OG-71. She sank in 90 seconds.

The largest ship sunk during August 1941 was the 10,298grt Otaio of the New Zealand Shipping Co. She was torpedoed by U-588 in the North Atlantic with the loss of 13 lives.

FISHING TRIPS AND MERCHANT SHIPS

United Baltic Company

BALTIC TRADER

After a few days leave I joined my next ship the m.v. Baltic Trader on the 28th October. The Baltic Trader belonged to the United Baltic Corporation on a regular run between Hull and the Baltic countries like Finland, Latvia and Poland so was as good as a ten day boat as far as I was concerned. A sister ship of the Baltic Merchant she had been built in Germany in 1954 and was of 1,698 gross tons (701.9 net) and like all of the Baltic boats in this class had three steel hatches and ten derricks served by electric winches. Two hatches were before the centre castle and one aft. The deck crews accommodation was aft but because my job on this ship was AB/handyman, a replacement post for a carpenter, I was given the old hospital as my cabin. So single berth with an ensuite (a sit-in bath), all looked fine.

As AB/handyman I found myself working with the boatswain most of the time so that meant no watches. Every morning my day started with taking and recording the soundings in the ballast tanks and bilges before carrying out any other general duties. Other than that it was pottering about doing general maintenance like replacing leaking porthole seals and I developed a remarkable skill in hearing the pop of a beer can before knocking on a cabin door and asking the occupant if their porthole was leaking. Like any other chippie I was required to drive the windlass and drop the anchor when required. I was also expected to act as boatswain when he took leave and went back to his home in Doncaster while we worked cargo in Hull.

This worked well for a couple of trips but then for some reason we were diverted to London and told that the regular run would now be London to Finland. This was no good for me so on the 14th December 1970 I paid off the Baltic Trader and once again returned to Hull.

BALTIC SWIFT

Somehow I managed to avoid getting another ship until after Christmas. I had made a few futile trips to the Pilot Office hoping for an opening there and had received the same negative story but I needed work, so on 30th December I signed on the M.V. Baltic Swift which was sailing almost straightaway. I wasn't bothered about this as the Baltic Swift was also a regular runner between Hull and Gydnia in Poland. This ship was a bit different to the 'Merchant' and 'Trader' being built in 1957 and being slightly smaller at 1,374 gross tons (457.75 net). The ship had three steel hatches (one forward and two aft) served by electric winches and six derricks.

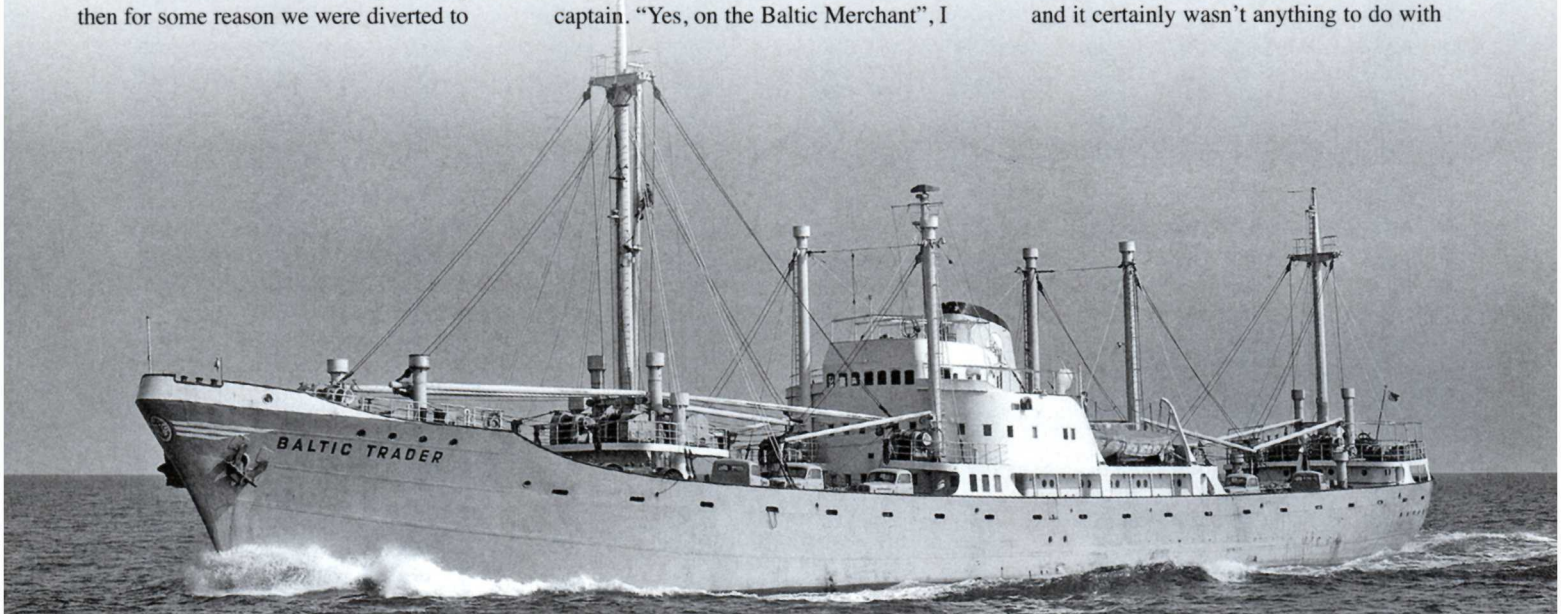
All of the Baltic boats I sailed on had had steering mechanisms different to the traditional wheel, some had press button steering and some a kind of aircraft wheel which worked in a similar way to the press button steering. I think the 'Swift' had the aircraft style. Just before we left our berth in Hull I was told that I was on watch so went up to the bridge to take the wheel. Waiting up there was the third mate and the captain. I recognised the captain immediately, it was Captain Foss who had sacked me from the Baltic Merchant for insubordination when I had been an ordinary seaman. He also recognised me.

"I've had you before haven't I?" said the captain. "Yes, on the Baltic Merchant", I replied. "That's right. I remember now, what was your name again?" "Addey captain." "Ah yes, Addey." The captain was stopped saying anymore by an interruption from the third mate who asked me if I was familiar with the steering on the ship and I was assuring him I was when Captain Foss started speaking again.

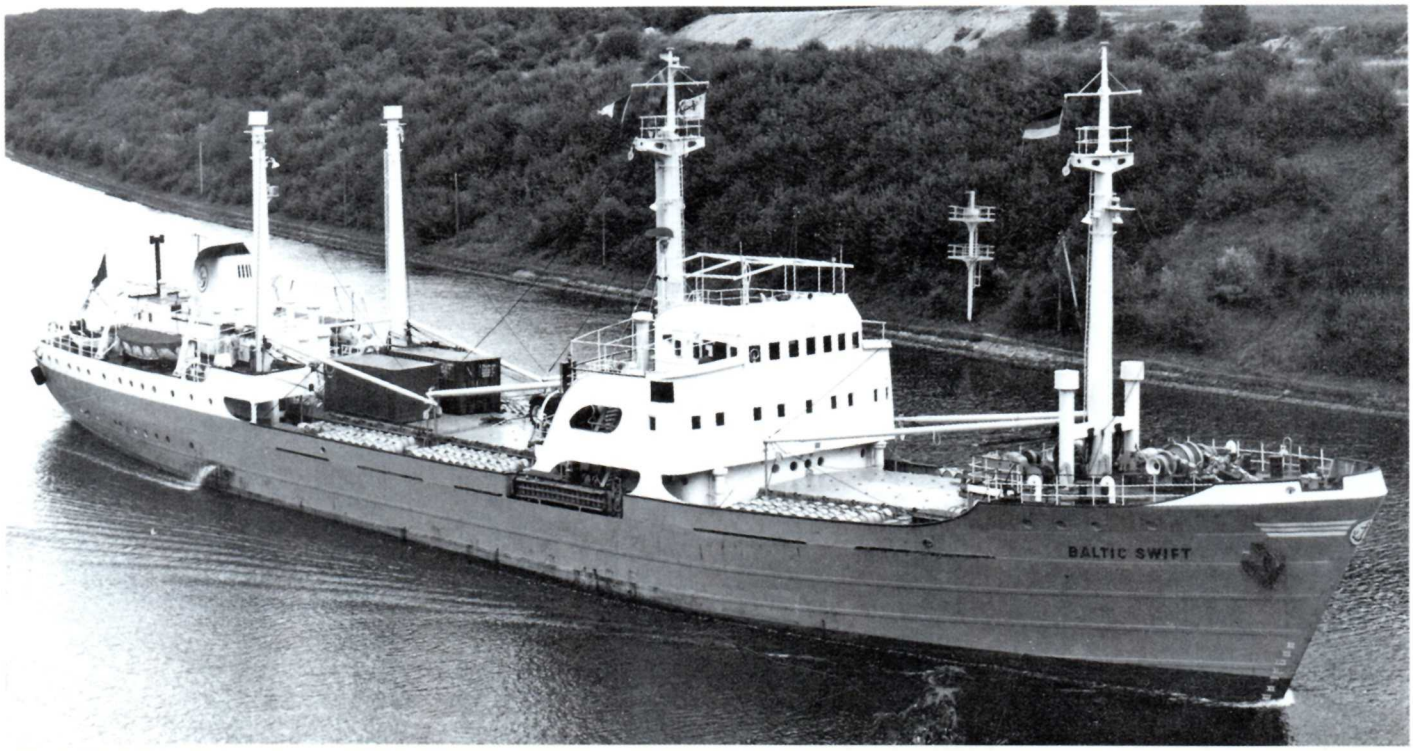
"Steering! Don't worry about the steering Mr. Addey knows all about how these ships steer, he's been with me before!"

I had expected a comment on the incident that led to me leaving the Baltic Merchant but the captain never mentioned it and the slate seemed to have been wiped clean.

The Baltic Swift was on the Gdynia run. In those days Poland was behind the Iron Curtain and had similar, if not quite as severe, restrictions as I had found in Russia. The area had recently experienced some rebelling against the Soviet dominated regime but it was still a shock to look down what was considered a normal residential street there and see a military tank parked at the end. Like in most Iron Curtain countries there was a flourishing black market in western clothes, mainly ladies, and foreign currency so this meant that we only got a token sub in zlotys and changed our English pounds for double the rate on shore. The currency was easily concealed but the only way to get clothing ashore was to either wear it or stuff it around the body. This meant that it looked like we lost weight at a considerable rate, going down the gangway looking like Oliver Hardy and returning looking like Stan Laurel, and it certainly wasn't anything to do with



The 1,698grt Baltic Trader was built in 1954 by Nobiskrug at Rendsburg. In 1971 she was sold to Medov Lines SpA of Genoa and renamed Medov Italia. In 1973 they renamed her Moncalvo and in 1978 she was sold to WI.E Line SpA of Genoa and renamed Emma D.P. On 1st August 1994 she arrived at Taranto to be broken up by B. & G. Shipyard. *(FotoFlite)*



The 1,374grt Baltic Swift was built in 1957 by Ottensener at Hamburg. In 1973 she was sold to Reef Shipping of Vanuatu and renamed Fijian Swift. In 1976 they renamed her Ha'Amotaha and on 12th March 1979 she arrived at Auckland to be broken up by Pacific Scrap Ltd. *(John B. Hill collection)*

any vigorous dancing that may have been on offer at the one nightclub that seemed to be open for our entertainment in Gydnia.

There were a lot of local girls using this club and their primary aim was to earn enough foreign currency to be able to leave the country. Many of them lived in small flats in faceless concrete blocks, that were very clean but sparsely furnished, but all with the obligatory crucifix hanging over the bed to signify their Roman Catholic religion. They were always on the lookout for the English pound and for western clothing, particularly Marks and Spencer clothes.

Most of us married sailors, if we ventured ashore at all, were happy to just have a few drinks and jokes in the warmth of the club. Most of the locals were friendly and we usually had a good time but knew it was over when we heard the singer with the band start crooning, "I 'ad zee lass voltz mit chew two lonny peopulz toge-eh-zzer".

I was on the wheel again some time on the homeward voyage, it may have been leaving Gydnia or approaching the Keil Canal, but we didn't have a pilot on board. Captain Foss was on the bridge though dressed in a silk dressing gown and pontificating like a maritime Noel Coward. Once again the third mate was on watch and Captain Foss's subject was comparing Gracie Fields, on whom he considered himself some type of expert, to modern day entertainers and their longevity. The third mate just kept saying "yes sir" and "no sir" but didn't enter the dialogue. Suffering from the boredom of steering when not in a tricky pilotage I decided to interject. "Gracie Fields may have been of her time and useful to lift people's moral during wartime but you can hardly compare her talents to those of the Beatles", I said.

There was an immediate silence and the look of shock on the third mate's face was a picture. Captain Foss was also caught off guard but he immediately smiled and came back with another comment about the greatness of Gracie Fields in comparison to the Beatles and a debate started. I said that that the only real comparison between Fields and the Beatles was that they both originated from Lancashire and a better comparison would involve a contemporary of Fields, George Formby, because not only did he come from Lancashire but also he was a singer songwriter like the Beatles. I went on to say that there were other similarities between a couple of Beatles songs and the tongue in cheek ditties of Formby but anyway, because Beatles songs were being recorded by other established figures their legacy would be bigger and last longer than that of Gracie Fields. The smile on the captain's face told me that he was enjoying being challenged rather than having someone say "yes sir" all the time. My spell on the wheel seemed to fly by and the captain thanked me for an interesting discussion when I was finally relieved although he did get the last word in on the greatness of Gracie Fields as I walked out of the wheelhouse.

Once again this ship didn't return to Hull as we were given orders to go to Ipswich where I paid off on 24th January 1971 as again my wife was asking me to come home. The train journey from Ipswich to Hull seemed as long as the journey from Workington to Hull but at least it was daylight.

On arrival back in Hull I was only entitled to a couple of days leave before returning to the Pool looking for a job on that illusive ferry. It was obvious on that first day back looking for a ship that there was nothing happening so I took my usual stroll down to the Pilot Office near the pier, climbed the stairs to the first floor office and tapped on the window. The Company Secretary, John Singleton, opened the window and I asked if there were any vacancies for a deckhand. John was used by now to seeing me and usually the answer would be no but this time he asked me to wait a minute. He came out of the office crossed the landing to another office with the words Commodore of Pilots on the door. A couple of minutes later he asked me to come into the commodore's office where I was introduced to the commodore himself, a man named Bill Perry. Mr. Perry gave me, I suppose it was an interview, and then asked me if I could start straight away. I said of course I could and was told to start the next day on a pilot launch based in Grimsby.

My wife was pleased, I was pleased and the next morning I was again at the Pilot Office to get my tickets for the ferry and train to Grimsby and when those big paddle wheels started to churn up the muddy waters of the Humber I got that old buzz of excitement once more.

This is an extract from Bob Addey's book,
"Changing Course: Fishing Trips, Merchant Ships and New Directions"
published by Riverhead, Hull.

Also available from Amazon

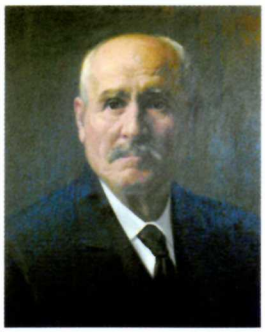
FEATURE BY DAVID EELES

THROUGH THE EYES OF THE ARTIST

THE RENAISSANCE OF THE GREEKS: Part Six - Freighters, Tankers and Cargo Liners

In the previous five parts in this series we have been fortunate to have been able to use the plethora of publicity art postcards produced by the Greek- owned passenger shipping lines in the post-war years to recall the expansion of this sector of the 'Greek Miracle'. However the really impressive growth in the Hellenic fleet at this time was in the much more prosaic area of the dry and bulk cargo trades where art images are much harder to find. Thanks to the researches of Prof. Gelina Harlaftis and others there are several learned treatises on the resurgence of the Greek fleet, and there is also the almost epic contribution of Georgios M. Foustanos in not only compiling several wonderful books illustrating the ships involved but also setting up the unique online 'museum' dedicated to Greek Shipping.

THE FOREBEARS



To the casual observer the spectacular rise to prominence of the Onassis, Niarchos and Chandris shipowners in the post-war years may give the impression that they were the architects of the Greek shipowning revival. But of course the seeds of this resurgence lay in the thriving Greek community of shipowners, many of them based in London as well as in Greece, who made the transition from sail to steam and then motor in the inter-war years and before. We have encountered the Goulandris family earlier in the series when they bravely sponsored the formation of the Greek Line with the **Nea Hellas** and later the new **Olympia**. The patriarch of the family was Ioannis P. Goulandris (1840-1927) pictured above left. He was a master mariner and owner of sailing ships until he cut his teeth with part ownership of a steamship in 1901. However it was the ownership of the **I. P. Goulandris** and another ex-British steamer which enabled the family fortunes to accumulate, especially in World War 1, although both ships were sunk by June 1917. From 1924 the family set up offices in London as well as Athens and, like most of the London Greeks, they were able to offer a variety of services to their compatriots which took advantage of London being at the centre of the freight markets, second-hand tonnage and insurance markets and of Britain being the foremost shipbuilding nation. After Ioannis had passed away in 1927 his son Petros acquired a steamship of his own, a venture his sons carried on after his premature death in 1930. In the meantime the other Goulandris brothers had been able to take advantage, as all canny shipowners did, of the fall in ship values following the 1929 stock market crash and seven more steamships were added to the family fleet.

*The **Ioannis P. Goulandris** illustrated above (courtesy of the Greek Shipping Miracle Museum, unknown artist) shows one of the first steamships that formed the platform for the growth of the Greek fleet in the early part of the 20th century. She had been built as the 3,153 grt **Foylemore** for Liverpool owners in 1897 by Richardson Duck at Thornaby. She was bought by E.C. Embiricos of Andros who provided financial assistance for Ioannis Goulandris and his five sons.*

The importance of the London Greeks to the shipping economy of London is demonstrated by the Greek flag which still flies proudly over the Baltic Exchange (right). Among them are the Embiricos family, 200 years of history in the maritime industry, originating from the small island of Andros, and others such as Mavroleon, Rethymnis and Kulukundis, John Samonas, Chatzipateras, Lyras, and Lemos who all used their London offices as the springboard for their growth and were ready, after the near decimation of their fleets in World War 2, to take advantage of any opportunity that presented itself.

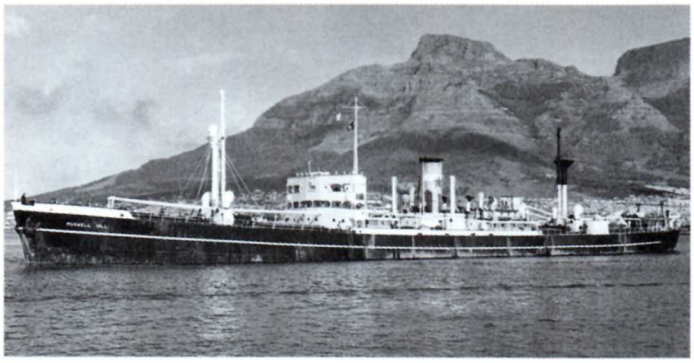
100 + 7

This is the title of Georgios Foustanos' remarkable book which illustrates every one of the 100 Liberty Ships and 7 T2 tankers that provided the lifeline for the beleaguered Greek families left bereft of any ships but with some financial resources from the wartime compensation schemes. For example the 1943 built (New England Shipbuilding Corp., Portland) **Hellas** ex **William De Witt Hyde** is shown (right). She was bought by the three Lemos brothers, Georgios, Michael and Pantelis, who were sons of master mariner Christos M. Lemos (1867-1940) who was one of the co-owners of the first Oinoussan steamship, the **Mariella Ralli**, in 1905. A typical Greek shipowning family, Christos had co-founded Lemos and Pateras Ltd. in London in 1937 and we shall see their later ships subsequently.

Artist's representations of Greek cargo ships are almost non-existent, but by good fortune Cowes artist Tony Westmore had won a copy of 100+7 in a W.S.S. raffle and been inspired to paint one of the scenes illustrated in the book. I was able to purchase this superb painting and use it to illustrate this article, as seen on the next page. The **Dirphys** ex **Frank Wiggins** was built in Los Angeles in 1943 and in 1947 was bought by the other part of the Lemos and Pateras partnership, Vassilios J. Pateras, and renamed **Dirphys** to replace a ship of the same name the family had lost in the war. Vassilios was also from the little island of Oinoussai, off the coast of Chios, and had acquired his first steamer in 1924 in partnership with his brothers Nicolaos and Georgios, with the assistance of the London office of S. Livanos, one of the most influential of the London Greeks. The Greek shipowners faced a dilemma after the war. They had lost most of their ships, and many valuable men, but despite having cash resources there were no second-hand ships to buy and the limited shipyard capacity, mostly in the UK, was busy rebuilding the established maritime fleets. However there was an obvious solution to hand, the hundreds of war-surplus ships built in the U.S.A. left in the hands of the Americans and for which they had little use. However there was strong opposition from the American Unions and shipowners to letting the likes of the Greeks have them in order to compete with their own ships. Fortunately several of the London Greeks had opened offices in New York at the start of the war, including the influential Rethymnis and Kukukundis company, and they had built up very good relations with the U.S. Government, not least because they had fully co-operated with the Allies, to their cost, during the war. There was still a problem, as few shipowners had enough reserves to buy ships even at a discounted price. Here the Greek state for once played a crucial role in helping its shipowners revive their fortunes.

*The **Dirphys**, illustrated here by artist Tony Westmore, typifies the close family networks that characterised the resurgence of Greek shipping after the war, to the extent that her master on delivery from the U.S.A. in 1947 was Giorgios Pateras, the owner's brother and probably a shareholder in the ship. She was scrapped in Shanghai in 1967, after a respectable 20 years of service.*

The intervention of politicians Sophocles Venizelos and Nicholas Avraam meant that the shipowners only had to put up 25% of the US$580,000 that each Liberty cost, with the rest raised as a loan on the strength of a guarantee from the Greek Government. From December 1946 until April 1947 98 Liberty ships plus another two similar ships were bought by a huge variety of Greek families, and a year later 7 T2 tankers followed suit. At this point Lady Luck played a part, as, unlike after World War 1 when a slump followed the high War demand, this time the Korean War followed in the 1950s by the Suez crisis ensured astronomically high freight rates which enabled many of the owners to buy ships, especially tankers, and pay for them in one or two voyages. As a measure of their success the Greek-owned fleet rose from 1.5% of the world fleet in 1947 to 17% at the beginning of the 21st century. Sadly the end of the war in Greece had brought tensions to a head between communist leaning ex-partisan groups and the 'official' government (and royalists) backed by Britain, and a bitter civil war took place between 1946 and 1949, resulting in the regime of the 'Colonels'. This instability forced many Greek shipowners to seek an alternative to domiciling their ships in Greece. Several London Greeks used the British registry for their subsequent expansion, as we shall see, but the majority, led by the New York Greeks, helped develop the flags of convenience based in Liberia and Panama. This suited American shipowners well too, as they could crew their vessels cheaply and avoid high taxation, something the American government did not oppose if it meant there could be a viable American owned merchant fleet.



*Typical of the 1950s fleet was the 7,130 grt **Sudbury Hill**, one of the riveted 'North Sands' design Forts built by Sorel Industries, Quebec in 1943 as the **Fort St. Regis**. As a condition of their sale, initially these ships were owned by Canadian Companies with Greek shareholders, in this case the Vancouver Oriental Line as their **Yale County**, until moving to London registry as the **Muswell Hill** in 1950 as seen above. She was broken up at Kaohsiung in 1967.*

*The **Tower Hill** was one of a group of eleven ships built during the war for Counties Ship Management. She was a 7,268 grt Doxford standard motorship and one of only four of them to survive it. She was transferred to the related London & Overseas Freighters fleet in 1950 and renamed **London Banker**. She passed out of their ownership in 1953 becoming the **Avisbank** and after a period under the Panamanian flag as **Southern Venture** she was scrapped in 1970.*

RETHYMNIS AND KULUKUNDIS/COUNTIES SHIP MANAGEMENT/LONDON AND OVERSEAS FREIGHTERS

The London Greek firm of Reythmnis and Kulukundis deserves separate attention as not only was it, as we have seen, extremely influential in facilitating the purchase of the Liberties, but it also spawned a significant contribution to the post-war British tramp ship fleet. In the days when most of my shipping information was accumulated via editions of Ian Allan ABC books, I can remember being rather mystified by the appearance of an apparently quite new company, Counties Ship Management, which did not seem to have a pedigree as a British tramp company but nevertheless owned an impressive fleet (20 in the 1959 British Ocean Freighters edition, of which only two had achieved an underlining status) of war-built standard steamers. Rather confusingly the ships were not named after Counties but after Hills. It was only with the recent publication of an excellent article by the always informative and well researched Dr. Roy Fenton on R.& K. and its derivatives that I was able to understand that most of the ships were managed by Counties for single ship companies which originally had County names, and some were owned by groups of Greek shipowners who used R.& K. as their agents. The funnel colours, buff with a white over blue band and a red star, were those of Rethymnis and Kulukundis. By 1938 R.& K. were managing 50 ships, and had built up a fleet of its own as well, taking advantage of the UK Govt. 'Scrap and Build' scheme as well as the rock-bottom second-hand prices in the early 1930s.

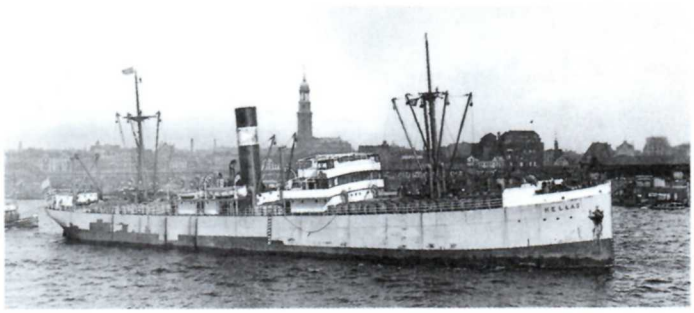
LONDON AND OVERSEAS FREIGHTERS

The Kulukundis family originated from the island of Kassos, where Capt. Elias Kulukundis (1791-1888) bought his first ship in 1835. A linear descendant, Manuel Kulukundis (1898-1988) arrived in London in 1920, forming Rethymnis and Kulukundis with his cousin Minas Rethymnis. Such was their success that four of Manuel's brothers and a cousin, Basil Mavroleon, who started as an office boy, soon came to join them in London. It was Basil Mavroleon who seems to have been the driving force behind the establishment of a British company, London and Overseas Freighters, with the primary aim of breaking into the tanker market, something British tramp owners seem to have been reluctant to do. Initially nine of Counties' dry cargo ships were transferred and given London names, with the intention of selling these to raise funds for the tanker purchase. It was perhaps a measure of the affection these Greek owners felt for their new domicile that they gained permission to display the Coat of Arms of the Corporation of the City of London on the bridge of every LOFS ship. The full story of this fascinating enterprise was well told in the World Ship Society booklet largely written by Stanley Sedgwick, who was the company's first secretary and later joint Chairman, to which I am indebted.

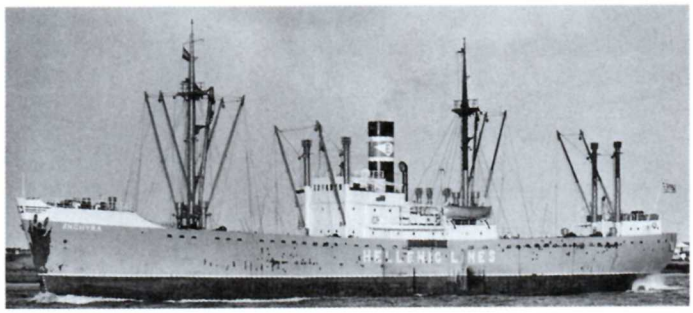
*Fortunately we have this excellent painting (left) by versatile British artist **Ray Nockolds (1911-1979)** to illustrate one the early tankers delivered from British shipbuilders. The 16,195 grt **London Prestige** was one of nine Doxford engined tankers to come from the Haverton Hill yard of the Furness Shipbuilding Co. She was delivered in 1954 and is pictured here at Suez. Her career shows the resilience required for tanker owners in the 1960s, as Suez inflated freight rates plummeted and the profitable time charters that had encouraged the start of the venture dried up. In 1965 the **London Prestige** was sent to the La Spezia shipyard in Italy to be converted into a dry cargo bulk carrier just in time to miss tanker rates soaring again as the second Suez closure took effect in 1967. In a final attempt to make the ships profitable some of them, including the **London Prestige**, were put under the Liberian or Greek flags and operated by Mayfair Tankers. The **London Prestige** became the **Mayfair Prestige** in 1972 but was sold to other Greek owners in 1976 and demolished in 1980.*

HELLENIC LINES

This iconic Greek shipping company deserves mention, (although sadly there are no art cards to illustrate its vessels), because its founder, Pericles G. Callimanopoulos (left) was one of the few Greek shipowners to take on the established Western cargo liner companies with their restrictive conference systems and develop a successful Greek cargo liner company which lasted well into the container revolution. Moreover after he moved to New York at the end of the war he, along with the Kulukundis brothers, played an important part in securing the deal for the 'Blessed' ships, the Liberties, and was able to obtain five of them for his own company. These ships operated in the trans-Atlantic trades in partnership with the States Marine Corporation. Pericles Callimanopoulos was unusual in that not only could he speak English, French and German fluently as well as Greek, but he spent his youth working for agents in Egypt and Piraeus who worked for liner companies, so became familiar with a type of trade that was very different from the bulk trades most of his compatriots were immersed in. By 1934 he was in a position to own his first ship and start his own liner company.



*Hellenic Lines' first steamship, the 2,107 grt **Hellas**, which had been built as the Norwegian **Kaggefos** at Oslo in 1916. She survived the war and was finally sold to other Greek owners in 1955 before being wrecked off Piraeus in 1966. (courtesy Greek Shipping Miracle).*



*Ships such as the 1,892 grt **Anghyra** became familiar sights in N. European posts where Callimanopoulos took on the established liner companies. Easily recognisable are the rather jaunty lines of a German "Hansa A" type ship, and the **Anghyra** had been built under German supervision during the war at the Boelwerf at Tamise, and from 1946 she sailed as the Belgian **Egypte** until bought by Hellenic Lines in 1958. She was broken up at Split in 1973.*

Showing great determination, Callimanopoulos gradually built up trans-Atlantic liner trades including a service from the Great Lakes to India via the Mediterranean and Arabian Gulf ports, and later services from the Gulf of Mexico. He was not afraid to invest in new, state of the art ships such as Ro-Ros, and also benefitted his home country by ordering six improved SD-14s from Hellenic Shipyards at Scaramanga in 1971-2. These Liberty replacements had, of course, been developed under the guidance of another Greek, Basil Mavroleon, whose company had bought shipbuilders Austin and Pickersgill on the Wear in 1957 when shipyards had long order books following the Suez crisis and skyrocketing freight rates. Pericles Callimanopoulos died in 1979 and was succeeded by his son, Gregory, who continued the modernisation of the fleet to full containerisation. However the company was financially over-stretched and the horrific trading conditions of the 1980s that saw the demise of so many British liner companies also spelt the end for Hellenic Lines in 1983.

EMPROS LINES

One other Greek family to successfully develop cargo liner services was the Dracopoulos clan. The Company's roots lay in the mid 19th century, when Captain George P. Dracopoulos, from the island of Mykonos in Greece, built the 280 grt barque **Philadelphos**. The first vessel to carry the name **Empros**, which means 'forward' in English, was a steamship acquired by his son, Markos G. Dracopoulos in 1914 (left). The 2,418 grt **Empros** was built in 1889 by Sir Raylton Dixon at Middlesbrough. The expansion into regular liner activities was initiated in 1950 by George M. Dracopoulos (1915-2008). George also saw the advantages of the new SD-14 design and ordered several from A. & P., including the second **Empros** in 1978 (right, courtesy of Malcolm Cranfield) which became a common sight around European coasts until she was sold in 2003 and broken up in 2011. Empros Lines happily continues in business to this day with some Supramax and Ultramax bulk carriers.

THE FOUR BIG PLAYERS

Although the Greek shipowners mentioned so far, and many other similar families, undoubtedly played a part in the post-war renaissance of Greek shipping, in the minds of most observers however the poster-boys of this phenomenon were two families which have become notorious for their social lives as much as for their shipping empires, and two others who kept a lower profile. Stavros Niarchos and Aristotle Onassis, the so-called 'Golden Greeks', consistently made the headlines as the wealth they earned from their huge tanker fleets propelled them to the pinnacle of high society, culminating in marriages to the daughters of that other colossus, Stavros Livanos, whose daughters Eugenia and Tina married into the Niarchos and Onassis families, and ultimately the marriage of Onassis to the widow of John F. Kennedy. The other titan of this period, Costas M. Lemos, was much more reserved and publicity shy, but was probably the richest of them all.

ONASSIS

Unlike most of the other Greek shipowners, Aristotle Socrates Onassis (1906-1975) did not come from a shipping dynasty, something that made him an outsider in their view, and as such he was not allowed to benefit from either the 100 Liberty ships or the 7 T2 tankers. Despite being forced to emigrate, penniless, to Argentina in his early 20s and after starting as a telephone operator, he had learnt Spanish and made enough deals, starting in tobacco which his family had dealt with in Asia Minor before they were expelled by the Turks in 1922, to be a millionaire before he was 25. He became a shipowner in 1932 and it was a measure of both his ego and his business acumen that in 1938 he entered the tanker business and took delivery of a tanker that, at 15,000 dwt, was twice the size of previous tankers. The diesel-engined Ariston, from the Gotaverken yard in Sweden, was the very first Greek-owned tanker and the largest in the world. The war bought a move to New York and further expansion, including a rather disreputable venture into whaling. Onassis was fascinated by whaling, taking guests on his yacht Christina O on whale-hunting expeditions. He had a T2 tanker converted into a four-funnelled whaling ship at Kiel and with a German crew between 1950-1956 it caught 22,000 whales, many of them undersized and illegally caught, but extremely profitable. More respectably, Onassis is credited with being the first tanker owner to use long-term charters to US oil majors to persuade banks to lend huge sums for ever larger tankers using Panama as a flag of convenience. Large orders, that included the 50,520 dwt. 'super-tanker' Tina Onassis, the first in the world, in 1953, revitalised the war-damaged Howaldtswerke shipyards at Kiel and Hamburg as well as at Bremer Vulkan. The following year saw the delivery of the Al-Malik Saud Al-Awal (above right) which was another example of Onassis' bold business strategies, when he made an arrangement with Saudi Arabia to create a national fleet for them under his control in return for carrying 10% of Saudi oil exports. This plan was not popular with the oil majors who boycotted his tankers, but perversely this allowed Onassis to profit greatly from tankers available on the spot market when freights took off during the Suez crisis in 1956. Onassis' subsequent career included owning the Monte Carlo Casino, collecting the world's largest private art collection, running an airline and it also involved a flirtation with Maria Callas, the opera singer, and then marriage to Jackie Kennedy, after divorcing Tina who went on to marry his arch-rival, Stavros Niarchos. Sadly his only son died in an air accident, and he passed away in 1975 and was buried on his private island, Skorpios. He established a public benefit Foundation in the name of his son which receives 45% of Onassis' estate.

*This atmospheric scene depicts the 47,130 dwt Onassis tanker **Al-Malik Saud Al-Awal** of Singapore in 1957 painted by Christopher Deakes, who was a shipping agent in the port.*

*The **Olympic Challenger** was converted from a T2 tanker into a whale factory ship at Kiel in 1950. G.J. Naerebout's painting, from a series of tobacco cards produced for Captain Grant's Shag, only shows two of her four funnels.*

NIARCHOS

Stavros Niarchos (1909-1996) was born into a wealthy family who were originally from Sparta, but who had emigrated to the United States in the 19th century. However Stavros was born in Athens and started work in his uncle's flour mill and then a shipping agency, where he became part-owner of his first ship. He always made sure his ships were well insured, so when he lost six of his ships in the War he had the money to buy replacements from the fleet of Liberties he helped persuade the Americans to sell. He also served in the Greek Navy during the war. After Onassis had married Tina Livanos, the youngest daughter of the premier Greek shipowner of the time, Stavros Livanos, in 1946, Niarchos quickly married Tina's older sister, Evgenia. He also vied with Onassis to build bigger and bigger tankers to satisfy the insatiable appetite of the American oil majors for ships on time charter to serve the world's burgeoning demand for oil. In 1956 he claimed the title of owning the world's biggest tanker when he took delivery of the 47,122 dwt **Spyros Niarchos** (named after his son) from Vickers Armstrong's at Barrow (above right). Today the Stavros Niarchos Foundation is helping out his old country in a variety of ways, including a new opera house at Athens.

LIVANOS, LEMOS AND CARRAS, THE CHIOTS

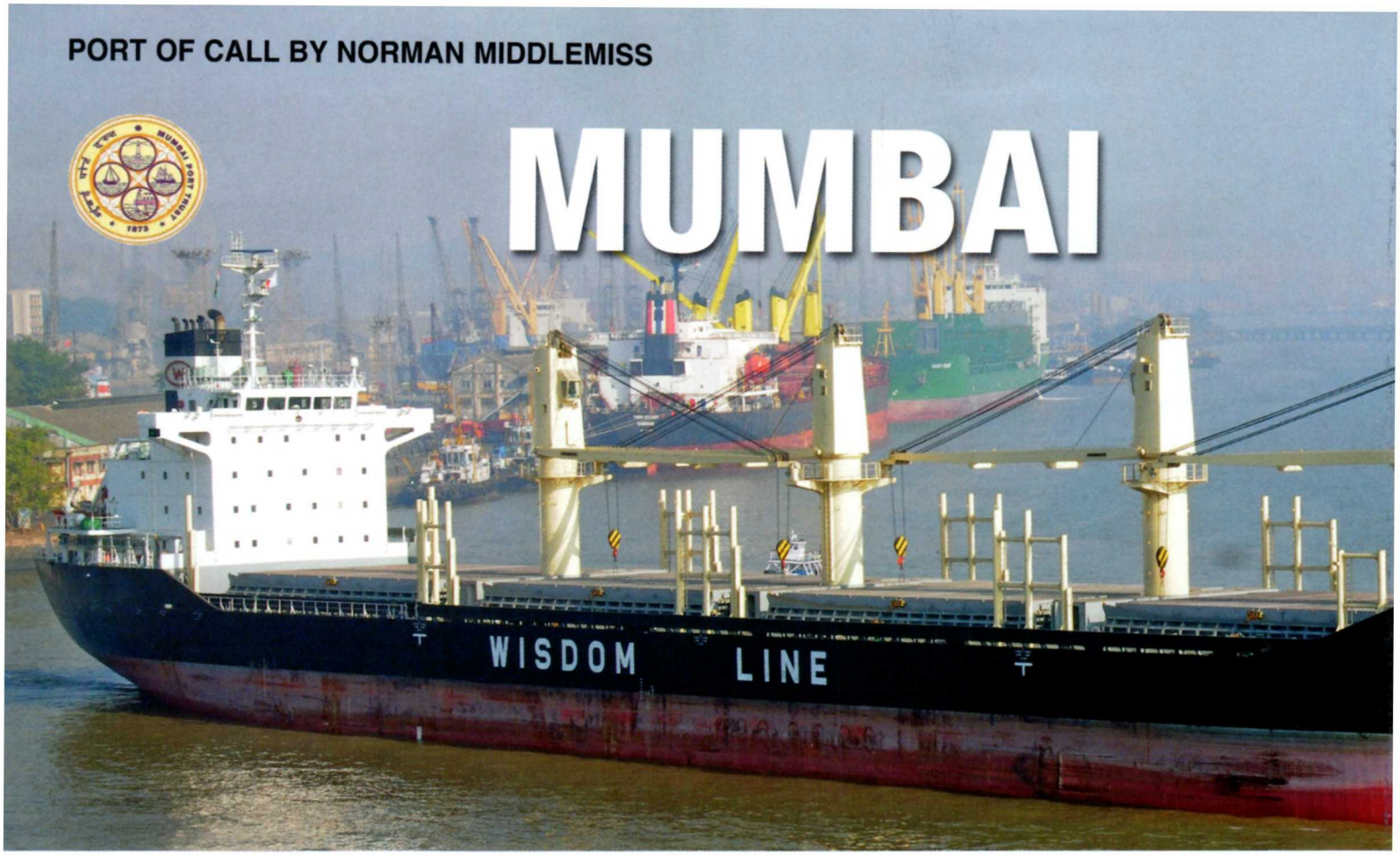
The fascinating story of these families, from the small island of Chios near the Turkish mainland and many from the village of Kardamyla or the even tinier island of Oinoussai nearby, was told by esteemed fellow author Norman Middlemiss in the February 2020 edition of this magazine. Most were able to revive their fortunes after the war by being able to buy some of the 100 Liberties to replace war losses. In developing huge fleets of bulk carriers and tankers during the 1970s and 1980s, including the first ore/oil carriers which Costas M. Lemos is credited with pioneering, these Greek shipowners greatly aided the growth of shipbuilding in Japan. They also supported yards closer to home, as the painting (right) by Nevenko Zunic of the 72,500 dwt bulker **Dimitris A. Lemos** illustrates. She was one of several built at the 3 Maj shipyard at Rijeka.

GREEK-OWNED SHIPPING WORLD LEADERS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The descendants of these families still account for some of the massive fleets that go to make up the 4,894 Greek-owned ships of 168,922,455 grt which was the largest fleet in the world in 2014 according to Clarkson data. But new names are also carrying on the torch, George Oikonomou of Cardiff and Dryships, Angeliki Frangou of Navios, and George Prokopios of Dynacom amongst them.

PORT OF CALL BY NORMAN MIDDLEMISS

MUMBAI



The Port of Mumbai, formerly known as the Port of Bombay up to 1995, is a very busy and large port, handling 60.70 million tonnes of export and import cargo during the year ending 31st March 2020. This was slightly down by 0.11 million tonnes from the previous financial year due to less coal and pulses handled. The huge number of ships that entered the port was 6,179 (up from 5,825 in the previous year) with the average turnround time being 2.56 days (down from 4.58 days in the year ending 31st March 2016). Most of the huge total of cargo is handled at facilities at anchorages in Mumbai harbour and is known as 'stream' cargo, including crude oil, petroleum products, coal, petroleum coke, scrap, iron ore, sugar, chemicals, molasses, oilcakes, edible oils, barytes, bauxite, china clay, chromite, copper, feldspar, gypsum, magnesite, manganese, textiles, machine tools, iron and steel, wheat, pulses, rice, barley, corn, millet, sorghum, potatoes, cassava, tea, coffee, chick peas and many other types of cargo. The cargo is handled either at the three principal enclosed docks of Indira Dock, Victoria Dock and Prince's Dock or at 'stream' in the harbour, with the dockland area situated in south eastern Mumbai, down the long Dock Road from the Victoria Terminus Railway Station.

HISTORY OF MUMBAI

Whilst archaeology evidence suggests Stone Age and Paeolithic occupation in the Western India region, the earliest known occupants of the Mumbai area were the Koli fishing community. As early as 300 BC, the Ancient Greeks called the area Heptanesia as there were seven islands that have since been joined together from that time, and today make up the Mumbai peninsula. From the 3rd century BC, there have been several empires and dynasties that have conquered the area, including the Asoka Empire, the Calukyas peoples, the Yadavas of Devagiri, the Khalji dynasty, with Muslim armies marching in and conquering the area in 1348. After a long spell as part of the Kingdom of Gujarat, the Portuguese explorers of Vasco da Gama and Bartholomew Dias and their followers failed to take the town in 1507 but did capture it in 1534 from Bahadur Shah of Gujarat, holding it during the 16th century, but they failed to hold on to it after it fell to the British Empire in 1661.

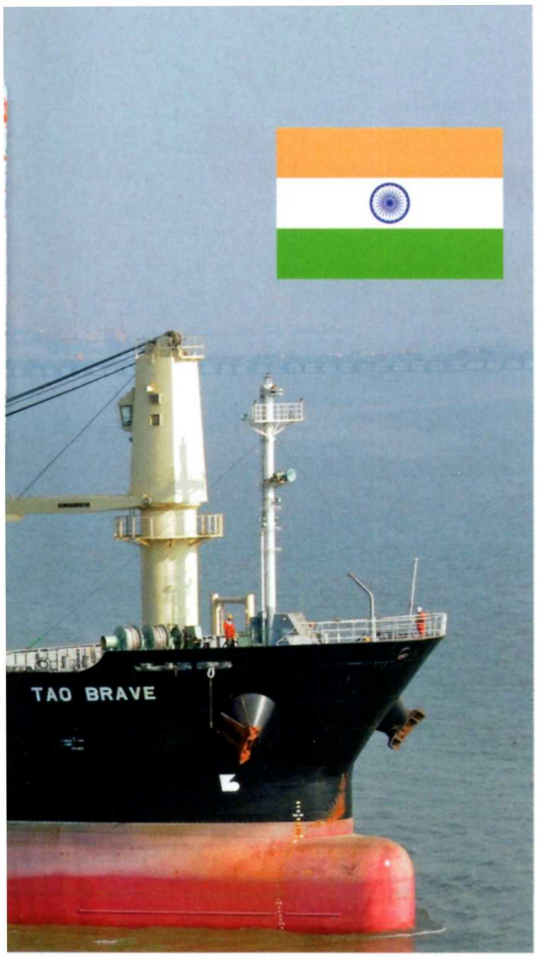
The religious dynasty of Catherine of Braganza of Portugal married her off to Charles II of Britain, from whom Bombay was given to the East India Company in 1668 as part of the marriage dowry. William Hornby became Governor of the city in 1771 and started a massive civil engineering project called the Hornby Vellard Project to connect all of the seven islands of Bombay. Finally, the last earthworks and land bridge was in place by the year 1845 to give the Mumbai Peninsula of today. Rapid industrialisation of the peninsula then began, with the Port of Bombay becoming the biggest cotton spinning and weaving market in India in 1860, with the first comprehensive rail network linking to the port in the whole of the Asian continent. The most frequent train service ran from the Victoria Terminus Railway Station to the neighbouring Thane region in 1853, covering a total distance of 21 miles.

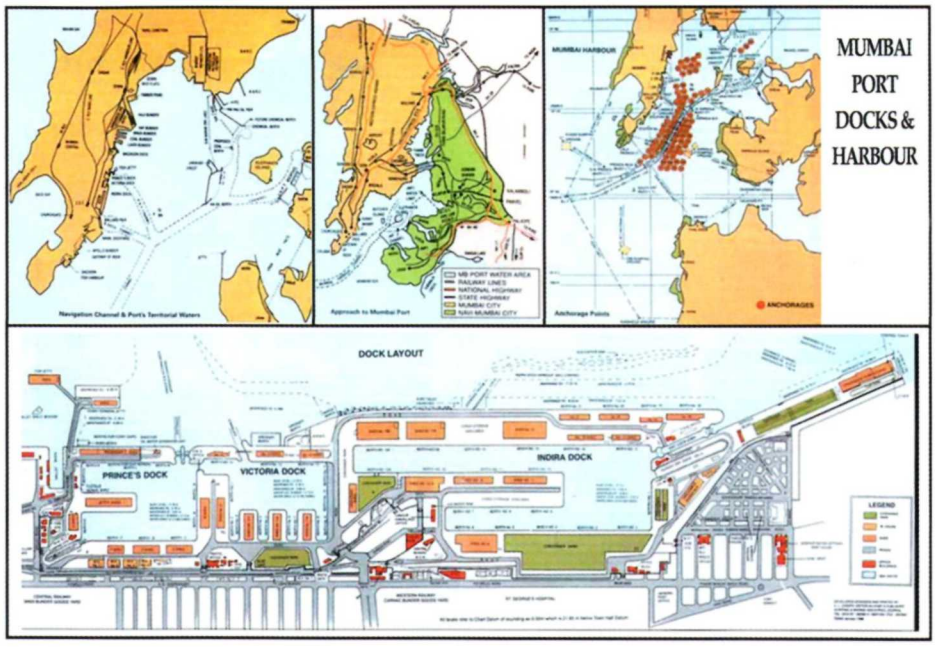
The current huge Mumbai train system is an offshoot of that same early network, with rush hour seeing many Mumbai commuters holding onto the outside parts of the carriages in order to reach the city in time for work.

The American Civil War cut off supplies of cotton to Lancashire cotton mills during 1861 to 1866, giving Bombay the opportunity to capture the world cotton market. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 gave a tremendous boost to the economy of India and Bombay, but the people of Bombay later suffered heavily from an outbreak of a devastating plague in 1896.

During the 1890s and 1900s, the Port of Bombay became a very prosperous institution, with Bombay becoming the centre of a political struggle leading to the first Session of the Indian National Congress movement in 1885, fighting for nationalistic freedom, which were eventually won after the non-violent doctrines of Mahatma Ghandi held sway in the Indian National Congress of 1943, leading to full independence from Britain and the creation of the States of India and Pakistan.

The new country of India began self determination in August 1947, ending 282 years of rule by the British Raj, with Bombay now the capital of Maharashtra State, carved out of the previous Bombay State that had included Gujarat and Maharashtra. In the 1970s, the Port of Bombay experienced another large wave of immigration and a subsequent big construction boom to house the new workers, and Bombay overtook Calcutta as the biggest city in India in 1992. In 1995, Shiv Sena came to power in Maharashtra



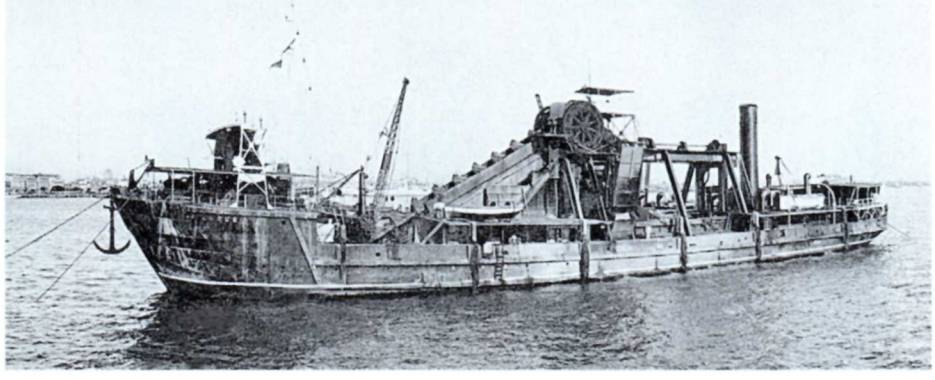


Left: The 25,064dwt bulk carrier Tao Brave of Wisdom Line leaving Mumbai in December 2011. She was built earlier that year by Murakami Hide at Hakata. Berthed in the background are the bulk carriers Thor Energy and the Madrid Trader. The 42,529dwt Thor Energy of Thoresen Shipping was built in 1994 by Namura at Imari as the Sanko Request. In 2000 she was renamed Athena Sea before becoming Thor Energy in 2005. On 14th October she arrived at Alang to be broken up. The 33,217dwt Madrid Trader of STM Deutschland GMBH was built in 2011 by Zhejiang Ouhua Shipbuilding at Zhoushan. *(Nigel Lawrence)*

Above: A map of the port.

Below: The Prince's Dock in the early days.

Bottom: The 1,925grt dredger Silurus was one of the major vessels involved in dredging the port. She was built in 1915 by Simons at Renfrew. In 1936 she was sold to the South African Government without changing her name and survived until 1966 when she was broken up by K. Nathan at Durban.

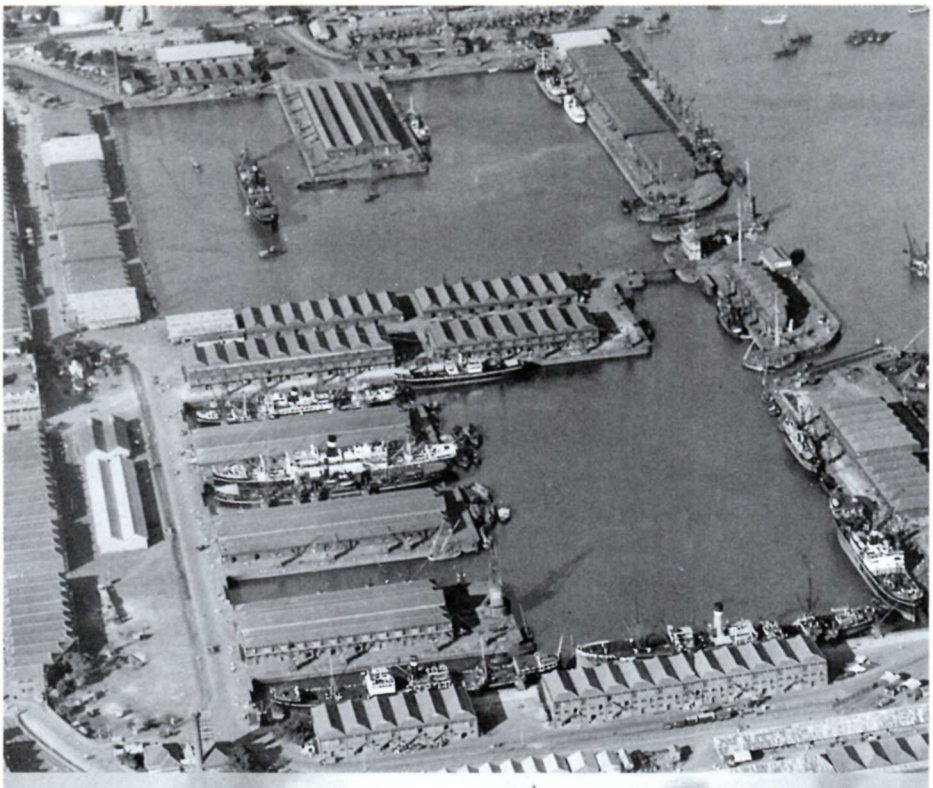


State by forming a coalition government with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Soon after, the city of Bombay was renamed as the city of Mumbai, renamed to its original name in honour of the goddess Mumbadevi, the deity of the indigenous Koli people. All over India, similar English city names were dropped in favour of local Indian names to assert regional identities.

However, Bombay has suffered from severe and intense riots and terrorist bombings and actions in recent decades, with hundreds of lives lost in the 1992/93 riots that followed the demolition of the Babri Masjid. Severe bombings and reprisals followed from rival factions, and in July 2006 seven huge bombs exploded within eleven minutes on multiple local trains. Bombings in late 2008 near the famous Gateway of India, known to generations of British troops, and the nearby Taj Mahal Palace Hotel, built in 1903 by the prominent Parsi steel industrialist Jamsetji N. Tata with Moorish red domes, arches, columns, crystal chandeliers lighting the spacious halls and galleries, was badly damaged when occupied by terrorists for several days. The death toll was over 175 lives lost with the city in 'lock down' and held hostage for three days. The Parsi community distinct culture and lifestyle is preserved today in the charming housing settlement of Cusrow Baug built in 1934 and today is home to over 500 families.

The Metropolitan Area of Mumbai has a population of 19 million people and is the fifth biggest city in the world. It is the capital of Maharashtra State with big populations in the Navi Mumbai and Thane areas. The Port

Above: The 433grt pilot vessel Lady Wilson was built in 1927 by Lobnitz at Renfrew. On 22nd November 1948 she was wrecked on Butcher Island Reef, Bombay. She was raised and broken up in February 1949.
Below: The Port in 1938.
Bottom: The aftermath of the Fort Stikine explosion in April 1944.



of Mumbai is one of the biggest in the world, with a new and growing large container port of Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) just six miles east of the Port of Mumbai across the harbour. The Port of Mumbai lies 432 miles south south east of the Port of Kandla.

HISTORY AND FACILITIES OF THE PORT OF MUMBAI

The harbour at Bombay was used for centuries by the Maratha Navy as well as the Portuguese and British colonial navies. The Port of Mumbai has developed from these humble beginnings to employ 7,000 employees and administer three enclosed docks with 43 berths, five alongside wharves including the Ballard Pier Station and Ballard Pier Extension, five oil jetties, two liquid chemical jetties and 63 anchorage points for working 'stream' cargo. The Bombay Port Trust was established on 26th June 1873 with Colonel J. A. Ballard as its first Chairman, with an immediate start on constructing the first of the three present day enclosed docks. The port today is administered by the Mumbai Port Trust, the title being altered in 1995 along with that of the city.

Port development was undertaken by the civil engineering and architecture partnership of Sir John Wolfe Barry (1836-1918) and Lt. Col. Arthur John Barry (1859-1943) as joint consulting engineers to the Bombay Port Trust. The port is a coastal tide gate harbour and is known as the 'Gateway to India', with a large building of the same name constructed on the waterfront where all British troops and most passengers alighted from passenger liners. The port has undergone tremendous expansion, not only with the facilities outlined above, but also with the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) handling containers at Nhava Sheva only six nautical miles across the harbour from the Port of Mumbai. This container port with 95% of its activity being the import and export of containers began operations in 1989 with the full blessing and financial help of the Bombay Port Trust as the Port of Bombay had become constrained in its handling capacity as a bulk and general cargo port.

Prince's Dock was opened in 1880 and today has eight berths with a minimum draft of 21 feet. Victoria Dock was opened in 1891 and today has fourteen berths with a minimum draft of 22 feet. Indira Dock is the main cargo handling dock of the port and was named after Indira Gandhi (1917-1984), daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru, first Prime Minister of India, and she served as Prime Minister from January 1966 to March 1977 and again from January 1980 until her assassination in October 1984. The dock was originally named Alexandra Dock, and was opened in 1914 with 21 berths including a passenger handling berth. Prince's Dock and Victoria Dock are semi tidal docks with vessels arriving and sailing only at high tide,

whereas Indira Dock has a lock enabling vessels to enter or depart at any time. Indira Dock has a total water area of 24.04 hectares and quays of around 4,000 metres in length.

The Ballard Pier Station and Ballard Pier Extension are on the southward extension of the East Arm of Indira Dock and are each of 244 metres in length, with the Extension having a modern passenger Terminal Building, handling the International Cruise Terminal and immigration and clearance facilities for the passengers and crews of cruise liners.

The International Cruise Terminal has 6,000m² of space, but only 2,500m² of this is used with full air conditioning, a modern passenger lounge, a duty free shop and café. Mumbai harbour has 63 anchorage points for ships to work 'stream' cargo, with pilotage necessary to all anchorage points and enclosed docks and wharves.

The port administration building at the entrance to Indira Dock is near a round, black and white stone Martello Tower that was completed in 1891 and was thus 125 years old in 2016. The history of Mumbai Port has been well written in the book 'Tides of Time' by M. V. Kamath, and is the story of the struggle to obtain trades union recognition of dock labour at the height of the Indian nationalist movement that eventually brought cordiality to management and trades union relations. Famine, plague, recessions, strikes and a major ammunition explosion in 1944 have all played a part in the history of the cargo handling docks, as well as ship repair work in the Hughes dry dock inside Indira Dock of length 304 metres with electric pumps for filling and draining the dock, two dozen welding plants and eight oxy acetylene connections. Decades ago, there were also shipbuilding yards owned by the Wadia families.

The main dredging work of Mumbai harbour and its enclosed docks was done by a fleet of dredgers, including the twin screw bucket dredger Barbus 830/24, the twin screw grab dredger Chelura 1,521/23, as well as other the grab dredgers and the twin screw hopper dredger Silurus 1,925/15 all built by W. Simons & Co. Ltd. of Renfrew with bilge side keels to take the ground. Suction dredgers included Widgeon, Spotbill, and Redshank of 740 grt and 800 tons hopper capacity, Moorhen and Dabchick both of 566 grt and 600 tons hopper capacity, the cutter suction dredger Vikas of 1,500 tons hopper capacity built in 1959, and the cutter suction dredger Vikram of 3,000 tons hopper capacity completed in October 1962 by IHC of Holland. Lady Wilson 433/27 was the port pilot vessel with Zephyr 121/30 as a combined pilot vessel and tug, the twin screw Sarus 830/14 as the port crane barge, and there were numerous harbour and salvage tugs owned by the Bombay Port Trust.

An extremely serious explosion in 1944 of the war built standard cargo ship Fort Stikine (see later in this article), and the colossal clearance work of the enclosed docks affected by the explosion, as well as the wartime reconstruction of dilapidated and war worn facilities took years to complete. The shipping companies of the Shipping Corporation of India, the Indian National Steamship Owners Association and the Bombay Chamber of Commerce and Industry remained loyal to the port, with traffic and throughput up to 7.6 million tons in the year 1951/52. This had risen enormously to 17.0 million tons in the year 1964/65 with 5.5 million tons of general cargo, 2.0 million tons of bulk cargo, and 9.5 million tons of crude oil and petroleum products handled at the Pir Pau pier.

The port equipment in 1964/65 comprised 49 shoreside electric cranes of up to 6 tons capacity for general cargo and bulk cargo work, including the discharge of ores, cement clinker, sulphate of ammonia, timber and many other general and bulk cargoes. The port owned 36 forklifts at this time, two dozen platform trucks, 58 tractors, and 54 liquid tank containers for stillage use. However, the movement of cargo inward and outward by rail and road was becoming extremely restricted, and resulted in piped networks being developed for handling crude oil, petroleum products and lubricants from the four oil jetties at Jawahar Dweep. The Pir Pau pier became so busy and congested that a second liquid chemical handling berth was eventually built beside the original pier to handle 2.5 million tons of cargo.

The four oil jetties at Jawahar Dweep are named J1, J2, J3 and J4 handle crude oil imports for the HPCL (Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. of India) and BPCL (Bharat Petroleum Co. Ltd.) refineries, with current throughputs of 19.80 million metric tonnes, which will increase to 22.80 million metric tonnes after the completion of the J5 jetty. Fully laden Aframax tankers of up to 125,000 dwt will berth at J5 with a draft of 40 feet, with two jetties for tankers up to 70,000 dwt and two jetties for tankers up to 48,000 dwt, and with bunkering tankers berthing at the MOT-JD berth of the joint BPCL/HPCL oil partnership. Jawahar Dweep will have a Tank Farm built on reclaimed land giving a faster turnround and pumping rate than already exists via the 4 kilometres of submarine pipeline and 3 kilometres of onshore pipeline. The Tank Farm will be owned by the BPCL and HPCL refineries, and land will be offered by the Port of Mumbai. Pir Pau old Jetty of 170.7 metres in length handles liquid chemical tankers of up to 47,000 dwt, and Pir Pau new jetty of length 197.0 metres was opened in December 1996, both jetties have alongside depths of 10.5 metres. A five million tonne liquid regasification handling terminal for importing liquid natural gas (LNG) is currently being built.

The natural deep water harbour of Mumbai is around 400km² in area, and is protected by the mainland to the east and the Mumbai peninsula to the west. The deep water of the harbour provides ample shelter for shipping, with the approaches well lighted and the Prongs Lighthouse to the north visible for 27 kilometres, and the Kennery Lighthouse to the south visible for 29 kilometres. The port is approached from the south west between Prongs Reef and Thull Reef, lying off the mainland to the south east to a distance of around 9 kilometres. The tidal range at the port is only 3.3 metres at mean high water neap tides.

The Vessel Traffic System (VTS) is a state of the art system for port movements, operations, surveillance and harbour navigation, and was installed in September 2011. The VTS employs three dual radars, five microwave links, two control stations, one radio direction finder, CCTV, VHF and UHF communications, GPS, AIS Automatic Identification System, and other electronic aids.

The Port of Mumbai is the leading automobile handling port of the entire coast of Western India, with a dedicated auto storage yard of 150,000m², with all pre-shipment storage being 30 days free of charge. The pure car truck carrier (PCTC) Hoegh Shanghai shipped 6,388 export vehicles, mostly JEEP SUVs, to Western countries on 29th March 2018, with vehicle traffic up 10.66% in 2017/18. Throughput and handling work has speeded up at the port since 5th January 2018 when a 24 hours seven days per week rota was brought in to speed up productivity and consequent reductions in the turnround times of vessels. This has resulted in a 10% increase in cargo handling hours without any further cost to users.

Total cargo throughput has increased from 59.18 million metric tonnes in 2013/14, to 61.66 million metric tonnes in 2014/15, to 63.33 million metric tonnes during the year 2016/17, and 62.83 million metric tonnes in the year 2017/18. Current port equipment includes several 100 tonne capacity tower cranes, four mobile cranes of between 50 and 100 tonne capacity, 25 forklifts as well as container handling equipment. The main channel depth is between 7.1 and 9.1 metres, the anchorage depths vary from 9.4 to 10.0 metres, the cargo pier depths vary from 4.9 to 6.1 metres, and the oil terminals from 11.0 to 12.2 metres. The Port of Mumbai is located at position 18°56' North, 72°53' East, and runs in a north to south direction on the south eastern side of the Mumbai peninsula. Ravi M. Parmar and Sanjay Bhatia have been Chairmen in recent years of the Mumbai Port Trust that operates the port.

A dedicated rail corridor has been operated by the Port of Mumbai to the Central Railway and Western Railway of India from the port to Wadala and Kurla interchanges

Above: The 12,892gt cruise ship Minerva at Mumbai in 1998. She was launched in 1989 as the Okean but was laid up until 1996 when she was completed as the cruise ship Minerva for Swan Hellenic. She has since sailed as Saga Pearl, Explorer II and Alexander von Humboldt before reverting to Minerva in 2008. In 2017 she was sold to Sete Yacht Management for conversion into a private yacht.
Below: The 11,115grt An Yue Jiang waiting to dock in 2003. She was built in 1986 by Guangzhou Shipyard for COSCO Shipping. On 29th November 2013 she arrived at Tianjin to be broken up.
Bottom: The 8,388gt Lena of SAL Heavy Lift was built in 1998 by Sietas at Neuenfelde. In 2015 she was sold to Steinkirchen Shipping GMBH and was renamed Lena J. In 2015 she joined Jungrhans Maritime as BBC Lena. She is seen here arriving at Mumbai on Christmas Day 2011.

(All photos by Nigel Lawrence)

from May 2016 and can also operate at night between 2300 hours and 0500 hours. This is due to restricted road and rail access to and from the port, with the five million tonnes of steel imports in the form of steel rods, plates and coils at the port, as well as coal imports (India is mostly deficient in steel and coal) using the rail corridors. The Port Mumbai operates its own fleet of five locomotives on its dock network of 55 kilometres of rail, with trains of 45 wagons handled with double despatch facilities. The New Ferry Wharf in the Port of Mumbai operates two berths for ferries on berths of 312 and 249 metres in length with alongside depths of 3.2 metres.

Construction sand is imported from the Philippines, and the port handles much project cargo, containers, bulk cargo, food, grain, fertilisers, and timber. Future development will take place at Kanhoji Angre, an island in the harbour with a fort built by the Portuguese and a lighthouse, for cruise ship passengers and tourists. The construction of a landing stage has already been completed, and the project will feature land and water based sports activities with 75% of the land area being soft landscaped to provide a suitable quiet and serene atmosphere for tourists. The existing buildings on the island will be converted for tourist purposes with street lighting, solar panelling, toilets, drinking water facilities and restaurants provided.

The recently developed Gamadia Complex is a vehicle storage area for export vehicles at the customs bonded area of the port, and has now limited handling damage to vehicles to only 1%. The Port of Mumbai owns 1,800 acres of undeveloped land for future use, but a private port is being developed at Rewas by Reliance Industries Ltd. at a point 9.9 nautical miles south east of the Port of Mumbai. This private port will use the Port of Mumbai main channel for vessels entering and leaving, but at the time of writing the charges for this use are still under negotiation with final estimates not able to be calculated.

No dredging is required in the enclosed docks, with only maintenance of the depth of the main channel undertaken by contract dredging, with the contract with the Dredging Corporation not renewed on 28th May 2018. The berth sizes at the three enclosed docks are now given:-

Indira Dock has 21 berths with 15 of these being multi purpose berths of total length 2,641 metres, five berths handling containers totalling 812 metres, and one longer container handling berth of 180 metres in length. The entrance lock is 30.5 metres wide and 228.6 metres in length, and alongside depth is between 8.8 and 9.1 metres. Indira Dock is being updated with transit sheds and storage areas being repaired and repainted to enhance the look of the prime cargo handling dock of

the port. Indira Dock is to the south of both Prince's Dock and Victoria Dock, as well as the Ferry Wharf and the Angriya Cruise Ship Terminal.

Prince's Dock with eight berths of total length 1,250 metres, with two of 212 metres in length, four of 140 metres in length, and two of 138 metres in length, with alongside depths of between 6.1 and 6.4 metres. Part of this dock is proposed to be developed into a new marina in addition to the already existing marina for hundreds of yachts. Restaurants, shopping malls, yacht workshops, diesel fuel stations, a Synchro Lift facility for boat repair, hard storage, water and electricity supply and waste disposal will be provided.

Victoria Dock with 14 berths with a total length of 1,732 metres, with eight of these of 122 metres, three of 152 metres in length, three of 100 metres in length, with a further berth reserved for Port of Mumbai tugs and launches. Alongside depth at all berths of 6.7 metres.

Modern transit sheds have replaced the old warehouses, with Indira Dock having a dozen transit sheds of 76,740m² in area. The Port of Mumbai has a total of 320,000m² of covered storage, and 176,000m² of open storage, with 20,000 container ground slots, many of which equipped with reefer plug points. There are four berths of total length of 796 metres for alongside repairs, two at Prince's Dock and two at Indira Dock, and one dry dock for major repairs, with Cochin Ship Yard as ship repair operators on 43,000m² of land and 18,600m² of water area. There are also several open wharves for coasters and sailing dhows to work cargo or for lay up.

A Ro-Pax service operates from Ferry Wharf in the Port of Mumbai to Mandwa and Nerul, and is used by tourists as well as local citizens by ensuring a third mode of transportation after road and rail links, and is faster at reduced cost and is more environmentally friendly. The Port of Mumbai owns a Botanical Garden named Sagar Upvan at Colaba on the southern part of the Mumbai peninsula. It covers over 50,000m² of land with over one thousand trees and three thousand bushes.

The maintenance of the garden is provided by the Tata Trust for the next ten years. Sassoon Dock lies to the south of the Port of Mumbai and overlooks Oyster Rock, a Navy owned island, and is a wholesale seafood market. It is also the site of the Sassoon Art Project, which is worth a visit in the early morning when the Koli fishermen bring in their fresh catch. The Dock is named after David Sassoon, who also built the Magen David Jewish Synagogue in 1864. The fishing trawlers that use Sassoon Dock have modernised facilities to unload their catches, including a 550 tonnes per day Ice Plant, a Fish Auction Hall, Net Mending Shed, and new access roads.

CRUISE SHIP CALLS AND TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

There were 52 scheduled cruise ship calls in 2020/21 at the International Cruise Ship Terminal at Ballard Pier Extension. However, the Covid outbreak resulted in these being cancelled. A new International Cruise Ship Terminal was proposed near the Gateway to India, but the Indian Navy raised issues of security and objected to this proposed location. The domestic cruise ship terminal operated two cruise ships, Angriya of Angriya Sea Eagle Pvt Ltd. and Karnika of Jalesh Cruises, on multiple cruises per season from the Angriya Domestic Cruise Ship Terminal at Ferry Wharf, Shed 3 of the Port of Mumbai to various port destinations in the country e.g. Goa, Cochin and Kandla. However, Jalesh Cruises ceased operations in 2020 and the Karnika has been sold for breaking.

Cruise ship passengers enjoy shore excursions to see some of the sights of Mumbai city, including the Gateway to India, the famous and signature landmark of the city that combines both Hindu and Muslim architectural styles and represents both cultures. It was completed in 1924, but was begun to commemorate the visit of King George V in 1911 to the city en-route to the Delhi Durbar, and only a cardboard mock up greeted the King instead. It was the first sight of all British travellers and troops to the city when moving to the steps of the building from troopships and passenger liners. It was also ironically the last exit point for all British troops leaving the city in a hurry at the end of British Raj in 1947. The building consists of a large central arch, with two reception rooms on each side, and was built of honey coloured Kharodi basalt with minarets and embellishments inspired by 16th century Gujarati architecture and was designed by Scottish architect George Wittet in 'Indo Saracenic' style. The gateway commands a spectacular view of the sea and when illuminated at night is very impressive.

The Wellington Fountain is near the Victoria Terminus Railway Station, the station being built in the 'Victorian Gothic' style in a rich extravaganza of domes, spires and arches. Frederick William Stevens was the designer, the station being completed in 1888 to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria. Today, over one thousand trains and two million passengers pass through on this Central Railway line station each day, many of them to work in the nearby Port of Mumbai. The Colaba Causeway road was constructed by the British in 1838 to integrate the city with Colaba, the southern most spur of the peninsula.

The Fort district contains the Art district of Kala Ghoda, which originally had an equestrian statue of a black horse with King Edward VII on top, which was removed in 1965. This area is famous for the fortress like building of the High Court, the second largest building in the city, as well as the Army & Navy Building, the Rajabai Clock Tower, the David Sassoon Library, the Bombay University complex, and the Jehangir Art Gallery and the three storey Prince of Wales Museum, the most prestigious museum in Mumbai. Shore excursions would also take in the Horniman Circle Gardens laid out as a public garden in 1872, the Flora Fountain erected in 1869, and the towering skyscraper building of the Mumbai Stock Exchange.

The Ballard Estate was reclaimed from the sea by the Bombay Port Trust between 1908 and 1914, and planned by George Wittet, architect of the Gateway of India, and converted into a business district. The General Post Office was completed in 1913 to both European and Indian styles of architecture and combines an Islamic dome with classical British towers and has a lofty three storey rotunda inside. The inspiring new Bandra to Worli Sea Link eight lane cable road bridge arcs out over the sea to link these two congested areas in the west part of Mumbai, and cuts the previous one hour road journey to just a few minutes. It gives amazing sea views by day, and is lit by many coloured lights by night, and the length of all of the steel cable used in its construction is equal to a stretch of cable around the circumference of this planet.

Elephanta Island in Mumbai harbour was given cave temples chiselled into a rocky cliff and dedicated to Shiva in the 6th century AD, and contains some great masterpieces of Indian culture. The island was renamed from the Indian name of Gharapuri by the Portuguese after a huge stone elephant that once stood there. Elephanta is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is worth a day boat trip from the cruise terminal of Mumbai to see the huge triple headed statue of Shiva, the glory of Elephanta, with almost all visitors emotionally moved by the experience of seeing this compelling statue, whose faces point in three different directions, forward and to left and right. Visitors can also take a longer day trip of one hour to the Sanjay Gandi National Park in Northern Mumbai with a wealth of birdlife, wild boar, fauna and flora, cobras and the occasional tiger in fenced off sections of the park. This treasure of nature is within the limits of the City of Mumbai and is one of only a very few nature reserves in an Indian city. English cricket teams played at the Oval Maidan ground against Sachin Tendulkar and his colleague Sunil Gavaskar, opening batsman and Captain, and other Indian batsmen on the west side of the city just off the glorious Marine Drive.

Marine Drive sweeps along a sea facing promenade which runs from Nariman Point to Malabar Hill, and was built on land reclaimed from the sea in the 1920s. It fronts a beautiful beach, Chowpatty Beach, and is also the main arterial link road between the suburbs and the prime commercial and

Above: One of the dredgers in modern times was the 9,709gt Kamal XXXV. She was built in 1982 by Wartsila at Turku as the Gogland for the Russian Government. In 1997 ownership passed to the Black Sea & Sea of Azov Dredging Co. and in 2009 she was renamed Kamal XXXV. On 1st February 2014 she arrived at Mumbai to be broken up by Buildcon.

Below: The 2,557gt offshore supply ship Seamec I of Seamec Ltd. at Mumbai in 2011. She was built in 1983 by Tangen Verft at Kragero as the Tender Tartan for Harstad Maritime. In 1986 she was renamed Bitish Providence and in 1988 she became Drive Ocean. In 1994 she joined Peerless Shipping as Peerless Stena 1 before moving to her current owners in 2000.

Bottom: Two of the many tugs belonging to the Mumbai Port Trust. In the backgound is the 316gt Ajinkya which was built in 2006 by Tebma at Chengalpattu and in the foregound is the 1999 built Rishi of 120gt.

(All photos by Nigel Lawrence)

administrative centres of Nariman Point and the Fort area with the Port of Mumbai in the latter area.

FORT STIKINE AMMUNITION EXPLOSION OF 1944

The Japanese Army had no capability for an advance into India after their surprise victories on the borders of the North Eastern Indian States and Burma in the Spring of 1942. However, the build up of Allied ammunition and munitions for the Burma campaign continued through the ports of Karachi, Bombay, Madras and Calcutta. On 14th April 1944, there occurred in the Victoria Dock in Bombay two cataclysmic explosions on board the standard 'Fort' type Fort Stikine, which threw debris and shattered windows over twelve miles away and claimed the lives of thousands of people. Fort Stikine had been completed by the Prince Rupert Dry Dock and Shipbuilding Co. Ltd. in British Columbia in 1942, and was named after an outpost of the Hudson's Bay Company at what is now Wrangell in Alaska.

Fort Stikine was managed by Port Line and sailed from Birkenhead on 24th February 1944 for Gibraltar, Port Said and Karachi, and her cargo included over 1,400 tons of high explosives, munitions, shells, torpedoes, mine signal rockets, magnesium flares and incendiary bombs. In addition, there were a dozen crated Spitfire aircraft on deck plus gliders, oil barrels, timber, scrap iron and gold bullion valued at between £1 million and £2 million in 12.73 kilogram bars. The gold bullion was required to stabilise the Indian rupee, which had dropped in value due to the (unfounded) fear of invasion by the Japanese Army. At Karachi, part of the ammunition and airplanes was exchanged for 8,700 bales of cotton as well as sulphur, resin, oil and fish. Bombay is the chief marketing and shipping centre for cotton and possesses facilities not found at Karachi, with the coastal trade of cotton from Karachi to Bombay dating back a very long time.
Fort Stikine then sailed from Karachi to Bombay and arrived in the Victoria Dock, which has fourteen berths, on 12th April. One of her deck officers described her cargo as 'just about everything that can blow up or burn'. In the mid afternoon of 12th April at 1400 hours, the crew were alerted to a fire onboard in number 2 hold, but they and dockside fire teams and fireboats were unable to extinguish the flames, despite pumping over 900 tons of water into the ship. The stench of burning fish prompted Capt. A. J. Naismith to order the fish to be removed, and while this was being done, fire officials looked at a copy of the stowage plan of Fort Stikine and advised that the ship should be scuttled as the source of the fire burned deep under new cotton bales. However, the dock was too shallow to allow the ship to be

scuttled, the advice was to steam the ship out to sea. Capt. Naismith was pondering this advice as he phoned the ship's insurers for instructions as what to do for the best.

At 1550 hours, the fire had taken a firm hold and the order to abandon ship was given, and sixteen minutes later there was a cataclysmic explosion that broke the ship in to and sent parts of the ship and debris over twelve kilometres away. Her boiler was found intact over half a mile away, and some two square miles of the eastern part of the city was set ablaze. A huge tidal wave swept across the dock and ripped ships from their moorings, with one ship finishing astride a warehouse. The emergency personnel and dock workers at the site suffered severe losses, with the official death toll put at 740 including 476 military personnel and 1,800 injured. Civilian deaths outside the docks in the city were not included, these were 500 dead and 2,408 badly injured. Capt. Naismith, Chief Engineer Henderson and Second Cook Alexander Joop were killed from Fort Stikine, the rest of the crew, knowing the cargo would explode, had headed for the dock gates and the Victoria Terminus railway station and survived. After the explosion, the Bombay Central and Victoria Terminus railway stations were in fact packed to capacity with the Indian population fleeing the city to outlying villages.

A second almighty explosion destroyed the remains of Fort Stikine at 1634 hours, and eleven other vessels including her sister Fort Crevier, and the Scindia Line passenger ship El Hind and cargo ships Jalapadma and Jalavijaya were destroyed at nearby berths in Victoria Dock. Jalapadma was nearest to Fort Stikine and her entire stern and poop deck with twelve pounder gun were blown over 200 yards away, and she was so badly damaged that she was later broken up in situ. Fort Crevier was used as a hulk until broken up at Bombay in 1948.

The other vessels lost were the passenger ship Baroda owned by the British India Line and completed in 1911 of 3,172 grt, China Navigation's Kingyuan of 2,653 grt, Wallem & Co.'s Norse Trader of 3,526 grt, three Dutch ships of Van der Heyden of 1,213 grt, General van der Swelten of 1,300 grt and Tinombo of 872 grt, and the Eyptian ship Rod El Farag of 6,842 grt and Norwegian ship Graciosa of 1,773 grt. Thirty dhows were also lost, and one gold bar was amazingly found over two miles away and returned to the British Government, and two gold bars were recovered during routine dredging operations at the port in 2010, others having been dredged up in the 1970s. It took seven months by 8,000 men to remove half a million tons of debris from the dock system and bring them back into operation. A further sixteen vessels were badly damaged in the neighbouring Prince's Dock, some having extensive blast damage to their superstructures, bridge and accommodation areas.

The cause of the two explosions was later ascertained as leaking oil barrels placed near to large quantities of sensitive high explosives, with up to 770 tons of highly flammable raw cotton in each hold, a very deadly combination. A memorial was erected in Mumbai to the many firefighters lost in the holocaust, and their memory is observed and honoured to this day each April during Fire Safety Week. The cost of transporting high explosives and ammunition in war time can be measured in the five thousand lives lost with several thousand more injured in the dreadful explosions at Bombay, and also at Halifax (NS) and at Bari in Italy.

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU PORT TRUST (JNPT)

JNPT handles container traffic with 95% of its throughput being containers at the Port of Nhava Sheva, and only 5% being general cargo. It was established on 26th May 1989 to take away some of the container, general cargo and bulk cargo from the congested road systems of Mumbai and the congested docks of the Port of Mumbai. Barges operate to the Port of Mumbai from JNPT on a daily basis with destuffing at the Port of Mumbai and goods then distributed around the city for local consumption. This saves 1,200 road truck journeys daily on the highly congested road systems of Mumbai. The port is located at Nhava Sheva near Sheva Air Force Station six miles east of the Port of Mumbai, with the harbour also crossed higher up the harbour by the Vashi Bridge. The port handles containers full of textile products e.g. cotton shirts, knitted garments, embroidered cloth, sports shirts, as well as chemicals, plastics, machine tools, aluminium ingots and other non ferrous metals, and vegetable and edible oils. In the financial year of 2018/19, the port handled 5.1 million TEU of containers carrying 56.43 million tonnes of cargo, as well as 7.88 million tonnes of bulk cargo at other quays in this important port for the whole of India, as the container total represents over 60% of the containerised traffic to and from India.

The common entry channel with the Port of Mumbai is 11.6 miles in length and is maintained at a depth of 11.5 metres. The channel is 1,100 feet wide at its entry point, leading to the container ship quays of 6,600 feet in length, as well as bulk cargo handling quays of 1,500 feet in length. JNPT operates eight tugs of up to 50 tonnes bollard pull, four pilot boats, two mooring launches, and one high speed harbour patrol boat to keep the ships moving in and out of the port. There are three container handling terminals:-

Jawaharlal Nehru Port Container Terminal (JNPCT) with three berths of a total length of 2,200 feet and alongside depth of 13.5 metres. It operates six Post Panamax and two Super Post Panamax gantry cranes and 18 Rubber Tyred Gantries as well as reach stackers and other container handling equipment.

Nhava Sheva International Container Terminal (NSICT) is operated by P. & O. Ports of Australia, with two berths of total length of 2,000 feet with alongside depth of 44.3 feet. It operates six Post Panamax and two Super Post Panamax gantry cranes, 29 Rubber Tyred Gantry cranes, three rail mounted cranes, 134 trailers, two empty handlers, and has access on two rail sidings to the national Indian rail network.

Gateway Terminals India (Pvt) Ltd. is a joint venture between APM Terminals, a Maersk Line subsidiary, and the Container Corporation of India. It operates ten Post Panamax gantry cranes, three rail mounted gantry cranes, 40 Rubber Tyred Gantry cranes, two reach stackers, two empty handlers, 90 trailers and 61 twin lift spreaders for faster loading and discharging.

The total length of the quays at all three container terminals is 6,500 feet with a maximum annual container throughput of 6.0 million TEU, which will be increased in future. The Nhava Sheva Port is connected to the Indian National Highway road SH-54, and also to the Central Railway of India for fast movement of containers all across India to the north, south and east of the country. The port quays are very close to Elephanta Island with its fabulous and ancient caves, with the Sheva Air Force Station directly behind the container storage yards and road and rail links.

The Shallow Draft Berth at the port is 1,500 feet in length with alongside depth of 29.5 feet, and is used by feeder container ships, dry bulk carriers, general and multi purpose cargo ships. The Liquid Cargo Terminal is operated jointly by the Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (BPCL) and the Indian Oil Corporation. The quay length is 984.2 feet with this important oil jetty being of width 132.9 feet. Tankers of up to 50,000 dwt are handled with a terminal capacity of 5.5 million tonnes of liquid cargo per year.

POSTSCRIPT

The Port of Mumbai performance standards during 2017 included an average of 8,738 tonnes of cargo loaded or unloaded per day in the major cargo groupings e.g. for Dry Bulk the figure was 1,708 tonnes per day, for Break Bulk it was 2,825 tonnes per day, and for Liquid Bulk it was 18,884 tonnes per day. The average turnround time of all vessels was 2.4 days, and the average pre-berthing time after notification to Port Control was two hours.

The Port of Mumbai is well known internationally, and recently has received visits from delegations from Canada, Spain (Port of Barcelona), Thailand, Belgium (Port of Zeebrugge) and from South Africa.

The Northern Shipping & Trading Co. Ltd.
THE 'HELMSDALE' SHIPS

As 'Staycationers' last year, my family opted to rent a 200 year old fisherman's cottage in the North of Scotland's Black Isle harbour-village of Avoch.

Adjacent to the harbour hard standing was to be found a small 'U' shaped plinth, which provided an illustrated but brief history of the port. This included a pair of unclear photographs of small coastal vessels and which sparked my curiosity.

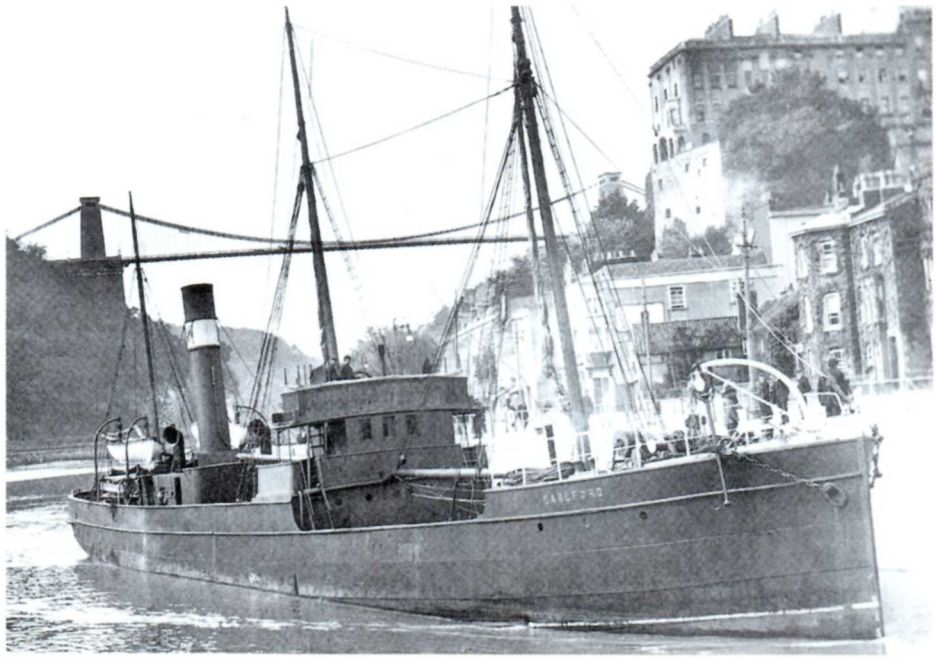
The first, a two masted tops'l schooner, was captioned "Dispatch" and which for many years had traded between Avoch and Aberdeen with inbound cargoes of mainly coal and according to season, outbound with grain, potatoes and/or timber. My subsequent home research revealed the vessel to be the 1888 Garmouth built wooden hulled Inverness registered but Gloucester owned "Despatch"- during the early 1930s reportedly one of the very last Moray Firth designed sailing vessels remaining afloat. Records also indicate that during her later years, the vessel traded from Gloucester to Ireland.

Of greater intrigue however was the adjoining photograph, captioned "The last coal cargo arrived at the harbour in 1984" illustrating the stern aspect of an all-aft, unnamed vessel whose design was in the nature of a Dutch motor coaster typical of the 1940s-1950s era. So unclear and somewhat weathered was this mono chrome illustration, that I opted to sketch the vessel's key features as a means to later identify this seemingly obscure but somewhat attractive little ship. A later search of reference material produced conclusive evidence that the vessel was the 1956 German built 402 gross ton motor coaster Helmsdale. Curious as to her origins with such name, investigation led to the early 19th Century founded village of Helmsdale, now a tourist and river fishing destination, located where the River Ullie (or River Helmsdale as it is more usually referred today) meets the sea on Sutherland's lower east coast. It was at this port which during earlier years had boasted the largest herring fishing fleet on Scotland's east coast, thereby providing full local employment and a burgeoning economy, where Helmsdale based George Couper & Co. Ltd., hitherto early 1900s periodic owners of several Wick registered cargo steamers and fishing vessels, operated their main business interests including herring curing and local distribution of coal imports for the region's residents and fishing fleets.

George Couper & Co. Ltd., is recorded as having transferred its interests in fishing vessel ownership to Adam M. Couper circa 1904 and further reference to them therefore, is beyond the bounds of this article.

Whilst earliest 20th Century shipping records for the Company are particularly sparse and fragmented, they suggest that their first ship was the 398 grt 1883 Paisley built iron steamer Sylfaen, acquired during 1900 from the Sylfaen Steam Shipping Co. Ltd. (Kneeshaw, Lupton & Co., Liverpool, Managers). Retained without name change for barely five years, the vessel was sold for further trading to Mann, MacNeal & Co. of Glasgow when renamed Earlford.

A second ship, the 329 grt Shilbottle, completed by Alexander Hall at Aberdeen during April 1910 was purchased during December 1911 from the Shilbottle Steam Shipping Co. Ltd. (W.M. Brechin, Manager at Aberdeen) and re-registered without name change. This acquisition gives all the appearance of an opportunity for financial gain only, for within a matter of weeks, the vessel was given the seemingly unregistered name of St.

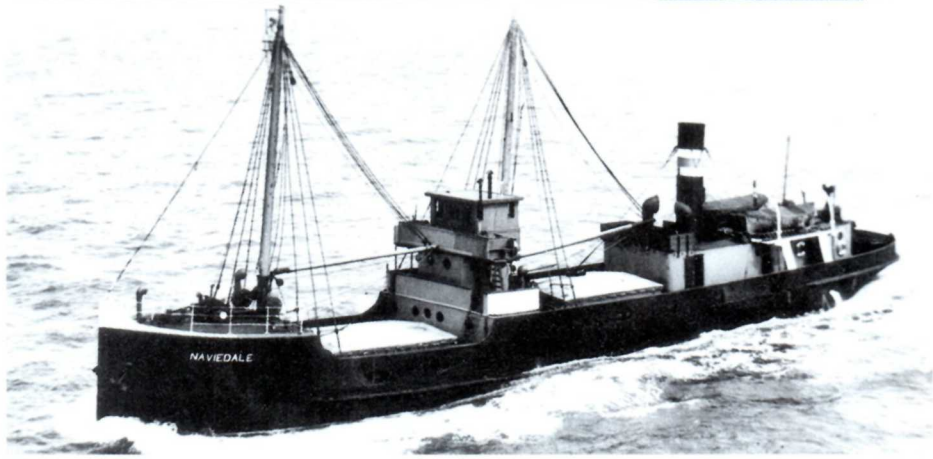


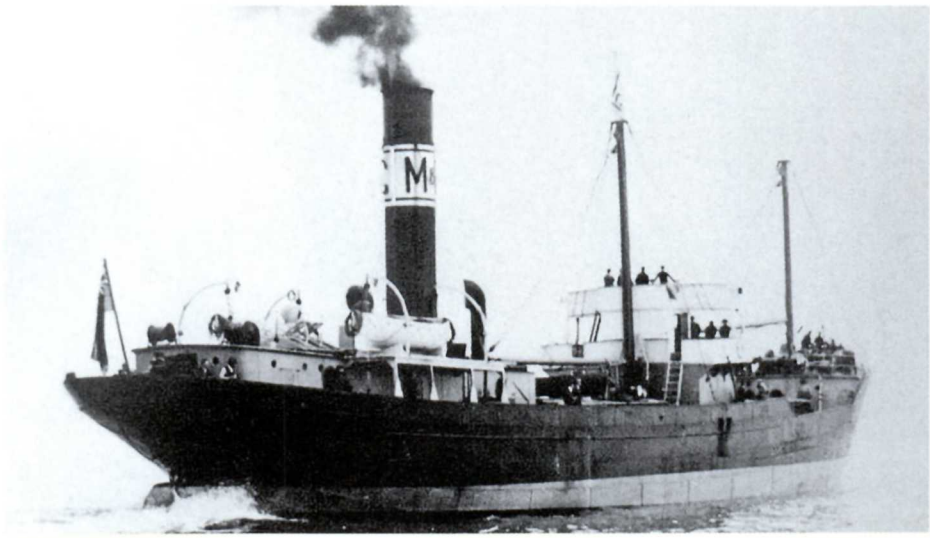
Left: The third Helmsdale of 433grt was built in 1966 by Scott Bowling on the Clyde as the Saint Ronan for J. & A. Gardner & Co. She became Helmsdale in December 1980. In 1987 she sailed as Holly R before being broken up by Andover Marine Services at Blyth where she arrived on 4th May 1990. *(C. Reynolds)*
Above: The 398grt Sylfaen was built in 1883 by Fullertons at Paisley for the Sylfaen SS Co. joining G. Coupar in 1900. In 1905 she was sold to Mann, Macneal & Co. and renamed Earlford as seen above. In 1915 she became Jerseyman of Channel Shipping Co. then on 24th November 1916 she was sunk by UB-19 30nm WNW of Dieppe while on a voyage from Swansea to Le Treport with a cargo of coal.
Below: The 609grt Berriedale was built in 1922 by J. Chalmers at Lowestoft as the Royal Regis for Regis Shipping. In 1924 she joined Seychelles Guano Co. as Almascos before becoming Berriedale in 1931. On 19th May 1943 she capsized and sank 7nm SSE of Duncansby Head while on a voyage from Blyth to Stornoway with a cargo of coal.
Bottom: The 383grt Naviedale was built in 1906 by Ailsa Shipbuilding as the Wheatear for Spillers & Bakers. In 1926 she joined James F. Brice as Grovehill before becoming Naviedale in 1932. On 14th May 1956 she arrived at Dublin to be broken up Hammond Lane Foundry. *(Jack Quinain collection)*

Donan and whilst at commencement of a passage from Coleraine for Liverpool on 24th February 1912 with a cargo of potatoes and turnips, the vessel on encountering a heavy swell at the notoriously dangerous mouth of the River Bann, struck and was wrecked on the West Pier. The crew of 9 plus the pilot were rescued by the Portrush Lifeboat.

Due to the apparent absence of further acquisitions, it could be surmised that between the years 1912 and 1930 the Company may have opted to utilise the services of other shipowners if and when necessary during the turbulent years of the 20th Century between the first and third decades. Apart from a very brief period of economic prosperity immediately post WWI, poor trading conditions, the disastrous miners' strike of 1926 and the Depression had prevailed.

No evidence of further ownership is apparent until the Company's renewed foray into rebuilding a fleet began with purchase during 1931 of the 1922 Lowestoft built 614 grt steam coaster Almascos from the United Africa Company of London, renaming her Berriedale, after the small estate village so named and located some 10 miles northeast of the Company's Helmsdale headquarters.

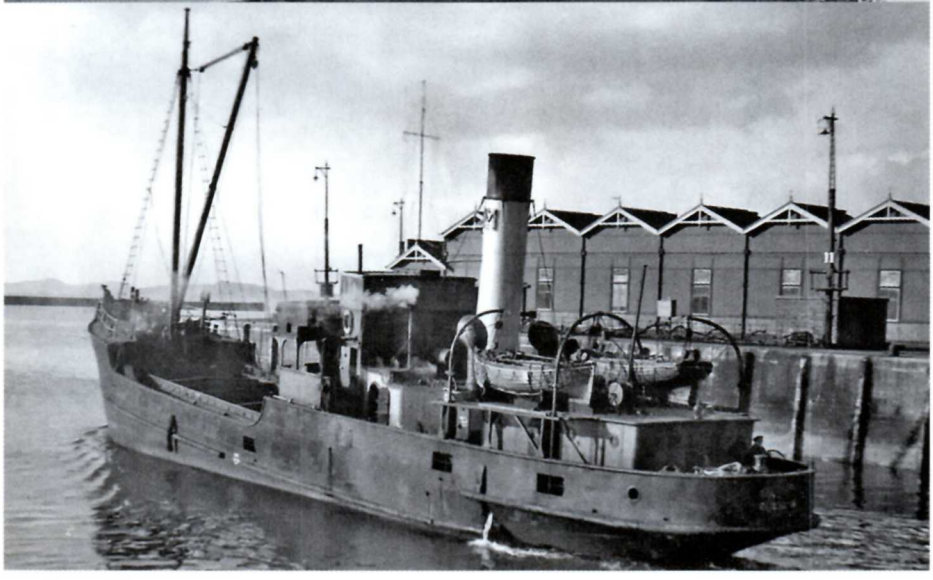




Above: The 717grt Helmsdale (I) was built in 1921 by J. Chalmers at Lowestoft as the Marjorie Mellonnie for Mellonie & Goulder. In 1930 she joined S. Robford & Co. She became Helmsdale in 1932. On 19th July 1939 she was wrecked at Crumstone while on a voyage from Greenhithe to Aberdeen with a cargo of cement.

Below: The 312grt Halladale was built in 1921 by Crabtree & Sons at Great Yarmouth as the Mary Aiston II for The "A" SS Co. In 1928 she joined Wallace Bros. as Broswall as seen below. She became Halladale in 1934 and in 1939 she was sold to South Wales Sand & Gravel, converted into a sand pump dredger and renamed Glen Spray. In 1962 she joined Davies, Middleton & Davies as Insitu before being broken up by Haulbowline Industries at Passage West in 1964.

Bottom: The 160grt Rimsdale was built in 1905 by Fullertons at Paisley as the Swallow for R. & W. Paul. She became Rimsdale in 1935 and in 1937 was briefly renamed Rustoer before being sold to Island SS Co. and renamed Isle Ornsay. On 25th July 1958 she foundered in Langton Dock, Liverpool.



Thereafter was set the policy of 'dale' suffixed nomenclature of surrounding villages for all but one of their future vessels. Berriedale's Port of Registration remained as London. Until the outbreak of WWII, the vessel was fully employed primarily loading coal either via transhipment at Aberdeen, directly at Firth of Forth ports usually Methil, or indeed on occasion at Blyth for the preferred better quality of the Northumberland coalfields rather than the locally sourced material, for discharge at the main fishing ports on the Moray and Sutherland coasts and on occasion Orkney's Stromness or Kirkwall. During WWII, the vessel's routes and cargoes became many, varied and somewhat extended.

On 14th November 1940, Berriedale was departing Aberdeen with a cargo of coal for Kirkwall to join the same convoy as a larger ship ahead of her, the 1,216 grt coastal passenger/cargo liner St. Catherine (ex-Highlander), when the latter was attacked and torpedoed by a German aircraft in a position just south of the port's swept channel, killing one passenger and 14 crew, including the Master and Second Mate. The vessel sank in 4 minutes. Berriedale however quickly picked up 17 survivors out of the water. It was during a later voyage from Blyth to Stornoway with coal when on 19th May 1943 she was struck by a heavy sea, capsized and sank in a position some 7 miles SSE of Wick. Whilst her Master was tragically drowned, the remaining 16 crew members took to a liferaft and were later rescued off Dunnet Head by an H.M. Trawler.

With a view to servicing those smaller ports of the region and their needs for coal in smaller consignments, the 1906 Ayr built 383 grt Grovehill was acquired during 1932 from James F. Brier of Bangor, County Down, duly renamed Naviedale and her Port of Registry transferred from Belfast to Aberdeen. During April 1944 this vessel was requisitioned by the Military Cargo Branch of the MoWT for the carriage of ammunition from Tilbury, preparatory to the Normandy Landings and placed under the management for such duration of Bloomfields Ltd., (Coastal Shipping Dept.) of London. During the period 5th June through 29th August, she undertook a total of eleven channel crossings mainly from Littlehampton but also from the Solent and Newhaven supplying the beaches of Juno, Sword, Arromanches and Gold. After her departure from the latter on 30th July, a stowaway soldier surrendered to the crew. During her return in convoy from 'Juno' during 2nd August, her steering gear jammed, causing her to sheer to starboard and collide with Christian Salvesen's 847 grt 1924 Helsingborg completed Fenja, sustaining significant damage to her own bow and starboard lifeboat, to necessitate repairs at Southampton from 6th to 16th August. Her last Normandy operation before MoWT release followed her final return to

Littlehampton on 29th August to load for Caen. The vessel continued trading until 1956, by which time her registered ownership had been transferred to that of Mr. Charles B Simpson, hitherto and for some years, principal manager of G. Couper & Co. Ltd. During 14th May 1956 the now 50 years old ship arrived at Dublin for breaking by the Hammond Lane Foundry.

During 1932, a third ship joined the Couper fleet in the form of the 717 grt Lowestoft 1921 built Marjorie Mellonie, when acquired from Sam Robford & Co. Ltd. of Ipswich, then a part of William Cory & Son. Renamed Helmsdale, whilst retaining her Ipswich Port of Registry, her service with her new owners lasted barely seven years, for during 19th July 1939 whilst on a voyage from Greenhithe for Inverkeithing with cement, she grounded in dense fog on shallow reefs on the northeast side of Crumstone on the Farne Islands and was wrecked, her crew of 10 being rescued by the Holy Isle lifeboat.

A further steam coaster was added during 1934 when the 312 grt 1921 Yarmouth built Broswall was acquired from the Liverpool based Wallace Brothers Ltd. and whilst retaining the Port of Registry of Liverpool, was renamed Halladale. Her tenure was also short lived, when, in the threat of impending war, she was sold during 1939 to the South Wales Sand & Gravel Co. Ltd., Swansea for conversion to a sand pump dredger.

1935 saw the purchase of the 160 grt 1905 Paisley built Swallow from the Wm. Muller & Co. (London) Ltd. subsidiary, the Vianda Steamship Company Ltd., when renamed Rimsdale, with Port of Registry retained at London and to be managed by Charles B. Simpson at Helmsdale. Temporarily renamed Rustoer pending sale, the vessel was disposed of during 1937 to the Island Steamship Co. Ltd., Glasgow under the management of George G. Jackson and renamed Isle Ornsay, with Port of Registry transferred to Glasgow.

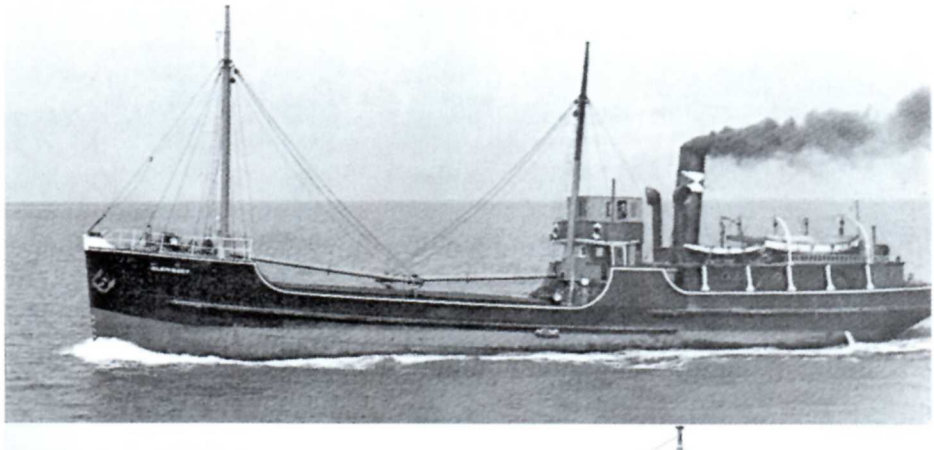
The 345 grt Brockley Combe, completed as Redesmere at the Beverley Yard, Hull of Cook, Welton and Gemmell on 15th September 1921, was purchased from the Ald Shipping Co. Ltd. of Bristol during 1937 and renamed Lothdale whilst retaining the Port of Registry of Bristol. She appears to have had an event free career until 1953, when the vessel was sold to Bremner & Co. Ltd. (J.R. Bremner, Manager, Stromness) renamed Orkney Dawn and registered at Kirkwall.

During 1940 the 394 grt steamer Glen-Mary, completed during August 1921 by Crabtree & Co. Ltd., Great Yarmouth, was acquired by the Company during 1940 from F.T. Everard & Sons Ltd. of Greenhithe, London and in accordance with wartime regulations, without change of name or Port of Registry. The vessel was sold out of the fleet

Above: The 345grt Lothdale was built in 1921 by Cook, Welton & Gemmell at Beverley as the Redesmere for Northwich Carrying Co. In 1926 she joined Ald Shipping of Bristol and was renamed Brockley Combe as seen above. She was sold to George Coupar in 1937. In 1953 she was sold to Bremner & Co. of Stromness and renamed Orkney Dawn and in 1955 she became Cumbria of Wm. Bennett & Co. On 3rd July 1957 she arrived at Troon to be broken up by West of Scotland Shipbreaking Co. *(John B. Hill collection)*

Below: The 394grt Glen-Mary was built in 1921 by Crabtree & Sons at Great Yarmouth for Wilson Bros. Bobbin Co. In 1929 she joined F.T. Everard & Sons as seen above and in 1940 she moved to the Coupar fleet still as Glen-Mary. In 1947 she was sold to J. & A. Gardner and renamed Saint Kearan, then on 6th April 1957 she arrived at Port Glasgow to be broken up by Smith & Houston.

Bottom: The 402grt Helmsdale (II) was built in 1956 by Jos. L. Meyer at Papenburg. On 7th November 1980 she was wrecked off Scurdie Ness Lighthouse, Montrose and was broken up by T.W. Ward at Inverkeithing the following year. *(C. Reynolds)*



Above: The Helmdale (II) on the rocks at Scurdie Ness at the entrance to Montrose harbour. *(C. Reynolds)*
Below: The Helmdale (III) in 1985. *(C. Reynolds)*
Bottom: The Helmdale (III) photographed at Newcastle in 1987 as Holly R, a name she sailed under but was never registered as such. *(C. Reynolds)*

during 1947 to J. & A. Gardner & Co. Ltd. when registered at Glasgow as Saint Kearan.

At the aftermath of WWII, it was becoming evident that the core business of George Couper & Co., that of particularly steam coal, was in decline due to falling numbers of steam drifters and trawlers and progressive replacement by oil engined vessels. At such time, the Company was being managed at Helmsdale by Mr. Charles B. Simpson and the decision made to retain the two surviving units of its fleet, Naviedale and Lothdale, with a view to reconstituting the shipping operation in the form of a new Company.

The process began during 1948 when the registered ownership of the pair was transferred to Mr. C.B. Simpson. The following year, the George Couper Company ceased trading and was replaced by the management company Northern Shipping & Trading Co. (Helmsdale) Ltd., of Aberdeen, led by C.B. Simpson and his fellow directors, sons Ian and George. Routine shipments continued in the carriage of a range of cargoes including coal from Methil and Blyth to Aberdeen, Moray Firth Ports, Wick, Kirkwall, Stromness and Lerwick with mainly summer voyages to Shetland with timber and return cargoes of drying seaweed from both Shetland and Orkney for processing at Lochboisdale, South Uist, or to Kirkwall with Fife grown malting barley loaded at Kirkcaldy for the Highland Park Distillery, returning with whisky in casks to Aberdeen.

Following disposal of Lothdale during 1953, as referenced earlier, it now remained for the Company to consider a prospective replacement for their remaining vessel, the then 47 year old Naviedale, in the form of a significantly more fuel efficient motorship. Thus during late 1954 a contract was signed with the West German shipbuilder Josef L. Meyer of Papenburg leading to the launch on 10th March 1956 of Helmsdale (II), the Company's first and in the event, only new-build. Completed during May 1956, the 402 grt/480 dwt vessel achieved a maximum trials speed of 10 knots for an in-service speed of 8 knots from her Koln constructed 6 cylinder 500 bhp Klockner-Humboldt-Deutz engine. She departed Aberdeen on her maiden voyage on 17th May 1956 just three days after her predecessor Naviedale had arrived at Dublin for demolition.

With much improved economics than earlier fleet units, Helmsdale ranged to ports far and wide in addition to her more locally based services, led by coal distribution from Methil, Blyth and Goole to Aberdeen, Peterhead, Wick and Kirkwall with return cargoes of seaweed for example from Orkney & Shetland during her continuing annual three summer weeks service to Alginate Industries, South Uist. Lucrative cargoes continued, including malting barley bulk loaded at Kirkcaldy for Kirkwall, returning with the

casked product to Aberdeen. The latter shipments ceased however during early 1975, with the introduction of The North Company's first Ro-Ro vessel, the then newly Aberdeen completed St Ola (III) on the Scrabster-Stromness ferry crossing, when road tankers carried the 100% proof liquid to Scottish mainland blenders. Occasional two day voyages to Hamburg to load 'second fishery' curing salt for whitefish and herring processing, were also undertaken to be landed at Aberdeen or Peterhead, as an alternative when necessary to Liverpool supplies.

Helmsdale's surveys and annual drydockings were routinely undertaken at South Shields.

By the early 1960s significant diminution of the traditional coastal bulk trades, particularly in demand for both domestic, steam and bunker coal was clearly evident, driven by a combination of the increase in use of oil and gas for most energy needs and the Government's requisite scrappage of all coal burning fishing vessels by 1963. Whilst other competing Aberdeen based collier operators were progressively replacing their steamers with motorships, sustainable mainly due to continuing rural demand for household coal and other bulk commodities. Such policy on a one-for-one basis was in the main being thwarted by the late 1960s introduction of fast and highly efficient rail services utilising purpose built coal-carrying rolling stock. It was clear therefore that the operation restricted to no more than a single ship on the part of the Northern Shipping & Trading Co. (Helmsdale) Ltd., was wholly justified. During 7th November 1980, whilst inbound to Montrose at the end of a voyage from Blyth with coal, Helmsdale stranded on rocks at Scurdie Ness Lighthouse at the southern entrance to the port. The vessel was abandoned and offered for sale 'as is where is'. Later salvaged, she was found to be beyond economic repair and during early 1981 towed to Inverkeithing for breaking by Thomas W Ward & Co. Ltd.

The Simpson family was quick to secure a replacement vessel in the form of J. & A. Gardner's 433 grt Saint Ronan, completed on 11th March 1966 by Scott & Sons (Bowling) Ltd. at Bowling. Registered to the ownership of John Couper Simpson and Ann Mackay Simpson at Aberdeen, following her handover at Plantation Quay, Glasgow on 18th December 1980, she was renamed Helmsdale (III). Her first voyage as such was undertaken during late December from Blyth to Kirkwall with a coal cargo. During her Gardner years, the vessel appears to have been dogged by failures of her bridge controlled 12 cylinder 650 bhp four stroke single acting 'Vee' configured DR. reverse gear equipped engine, constructed by Dorman & Co. Ltd. of Stafford to achieve a service speed of 8 knots. This resulted in direct replacement of improved versions of this machinery on two occasions, during 1968 and 1973. It was unfortunate that by the time of this vessel's entry into service under the Simpsons' Northern Shipping & Trading Company (Helmsdale) Ltd., importation of Polish coal through Peterhead, Macduff and Inverness was underway, effectively and forever denying her of coal shipments into her home port. The lengthy miners' strike of 1984-85 exacerbated and indeed accelerated the decline in supplies of UK sourced coal including smokeless fuels, resulting in increasing foreign imports, usually in the form of large tonnages single shipped to ports in the south and onwards transported by truck or rail, deeply affecting the ongoing operations of Helmsdale, by then the last remaining coaster registered at Aberdeen. She did however deliver her first post-strike shipment of 480 tons of household coal from Blyth to Peterhead on 13th March 1985. Later in the year however Helmsdale was forced into layup when she arrived at Buckie on 30th August 1985 where she lay until early 1987 when sold to a partnership of Neil Smith, John Rigby, Peter Ham, Avi Rosenberg and Peter Howerd of Basingstoke, with CKC Shipping Services, Managing Agents. The vessel was recorded as having arrived at Wick from Sunderland with a limestone cargo on 24th April 1987, under the unregistered name of Holly R, the only occasion during which she used the name. On 10th September 1987 she arrived at Leith to lay up pending her sale later in the month to Equaltrade Imports Ltd. of London, with Mardyke Shipping & Chartering Ltd, Hull appointed managing agents. During February 1990 she was sold to Andover Marine Services Ltd. of Norwich for demolition, arriving at Blyth as Helmsdale, under tow of the 229 grt tug Mister Cornishman (ex Hazelgarth, built Appledore, 1959) for dismantling by Oceanics UK Ltd. on Andover Marine's behalf.

The Helmsdale (III) laid up at Buckie in 1986.

Thus ended the management operations of the Northern Shipping & Trading Company (Helmsdale) Ltd.

The photograph of the vessel referenced in paragraph four, captioned "The last coal cargo arrived at the harbour in 1984", would clearly not have been of that of Helmsdale (II) of 1956-80. Rather, the likelihood is that the vessel to make that final delivery was Helmsdale (III) of 1980-85.

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READERS' CORNER

June's unknown ship brought only a few replies most of whom identified her as the Humbergate

Alan Blackwood writes: This month's 'unknown' is I believe the 1,051 gross ton collier Humbergate. Launched on 18th December 1944 as Empire Chelsea, she was one of a group of ten dry cargo coasters, the design origin of which was the1941 Burntisland completed Tudor Queen of the Queenship Navigation Co. and to be constructed by three Scottish Shipbuilders to the order of the Ministry of War Transport. Empire Chelsea was the second of five virtually identical vessels of the class built by J. Lewis & Sons at Aberdeen, all of which featured three masts and only two cargo holds, for use primarily in the carriage of bulk cargoes, mainly coal. The remaining five however, completed by Ardrossan Dockyard (1) and George Brown & Co., Greenock (4), were two masted three hold vessels with full cargo handling gear including steam winches serving a single derrick over each of their three hatches.

Empire Chelsea, completed on 23rd February 1945, was registered 2 days earlier at Aberdeen and duly passed to the management of Onesimus Dorey & Sons Ltd. of Guernsey. With overall dimensions of 212'6" x 32'10" and a maximum summer draught of 15'2.5", she was powered by a triple expansion steam engine of 117 nhp., fed by steam at 200 psi from one single ended boiler – the whole constructed by her builder, returning a maximum speed of 9.5 knots.

During April 1946 the vessel was acquired by the Hull Gates Shipping Co. Ltd., with Craggs & Jenkins Ltd. of Hull as managers, specifically for operations in the carriage of coal, renamed Humbergate and registered at Goole. In 1955 she was sold to the Efford Shipping Co. Ltd. with PoR of London, renamed Springwear and placed under the management of Comben Longstaff & Co. Ltd., London. Due to the renaming of her owners during 1957, she was reregistered to Springfjord Shipping Co. Ltd. without name or PoR change and later laid up at Grimsby under continuing Comben Longstaff management.

1959 saw her sale to the Lynn Shipping Co. Ltd. (Thomas E. Kettlewell & Son Ltd., Hull as managers) when renamed Lynnwear, whilst retaining her London PoR. During 1962 she was sold on to the South Star Corporation of Panama City and renamed Dumbo for continued trading under the Panamanian flag, with V & A Ensenat of Madrid appointed managers. During 22nd June 1967 she arrived at Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, with significant engine trouble and was subsequently arrested for unpaid debts and anchored off the port. During November 1968 she was auctioned by court order, when sold to Naviera Del Odiel S.A. The sale however did not eventuate due to the vessel's stranding on the 24th November, when blown ashore on Alcavaneras Beach, Las Palmas. Refloated on 19th April 1969 and thereafter laid up under continued arrest, she was put up for further auction at Las Palmas as a constructive total loss on 10th December 1969 and sold with the intention of conversion to a nightclub, but later resold to Don Martin Juanatez Malvarez for demolition at Las Palmas.

Mike Goadby writes: This month's unknown ship is the 1,051grt steam coaster Humbergate, built by J. Lewis & Sons Ltd, Aberdeen in 1945 for the M.O.W.T. as Empire Chelsea. She was sold in 1946 to Hull Gates Shipping Co. Ltd., (Craggs & Jenkins managers). In 1947 she was renamed Humbergate. In 1955 she was acquired by Efford Shipping Co. Ltd Ltd, (Comben Longstaff managers) and renamed Springwear. In 1959 she was sold to Lynn Shipping Co. Ltd., (E. Kettlewell & Sons Ltd., managers) and renamed Lynnwear. In 1962 she was sold to South Star, Corp., Panama, and renamed Dumbo. In 1967 she arrived at Las Palmas with engine trouble and in 1968 she was blown ashore on Alcalvaneras beach and declared a C.T.L. In 1969 she was refloated and sold to Don Martin Juanatez Malvarez for demolition at Las Palmas.

John Jordan writes: This may be a vessel built by John Lewis, Aberdeen for the Shipping Controller. She was, as built, Empire Chelsea 1945-1947. She was allocated or sold to Hull Gates Shipping Company and named, as depicted Humbergate in 1947. In 1955 she was sold to Springfjord Shipping of London and renamed Springwear. In 1959 she was sold on to Lynn Shipping of London and renamed Lynnwear. In 1962 she was sold to the Panamanian flag and renamed Dumbo. In 1968 during a storm, and while under arrest, she was wrecked on Alcalavaneras Beach at Las Palmas, Canary Islands. She had dimensions of 64.8x10m on a tonnage of 1,051grt and dwt 1,452 tons.

Peter Sommerville writes: This month's identification is a real long shot as the funnel marking do not correspond to the ship I have named but as all other aspects do, so I will give it a go! She could be the Empire Fenchurch built by John Lewis & Son, Aberdeen in 1945 for the Ministry of War Transport. She became the Yewforest of John Stewart and then the Perelle of Guernsey company O. Dorey & Sons in 1954. In 1962 she was converted to a barge in Sweden. The funnel in the photograph could be J. Hay & Sons of Glasgow but I could not find suitable likeness in my search!

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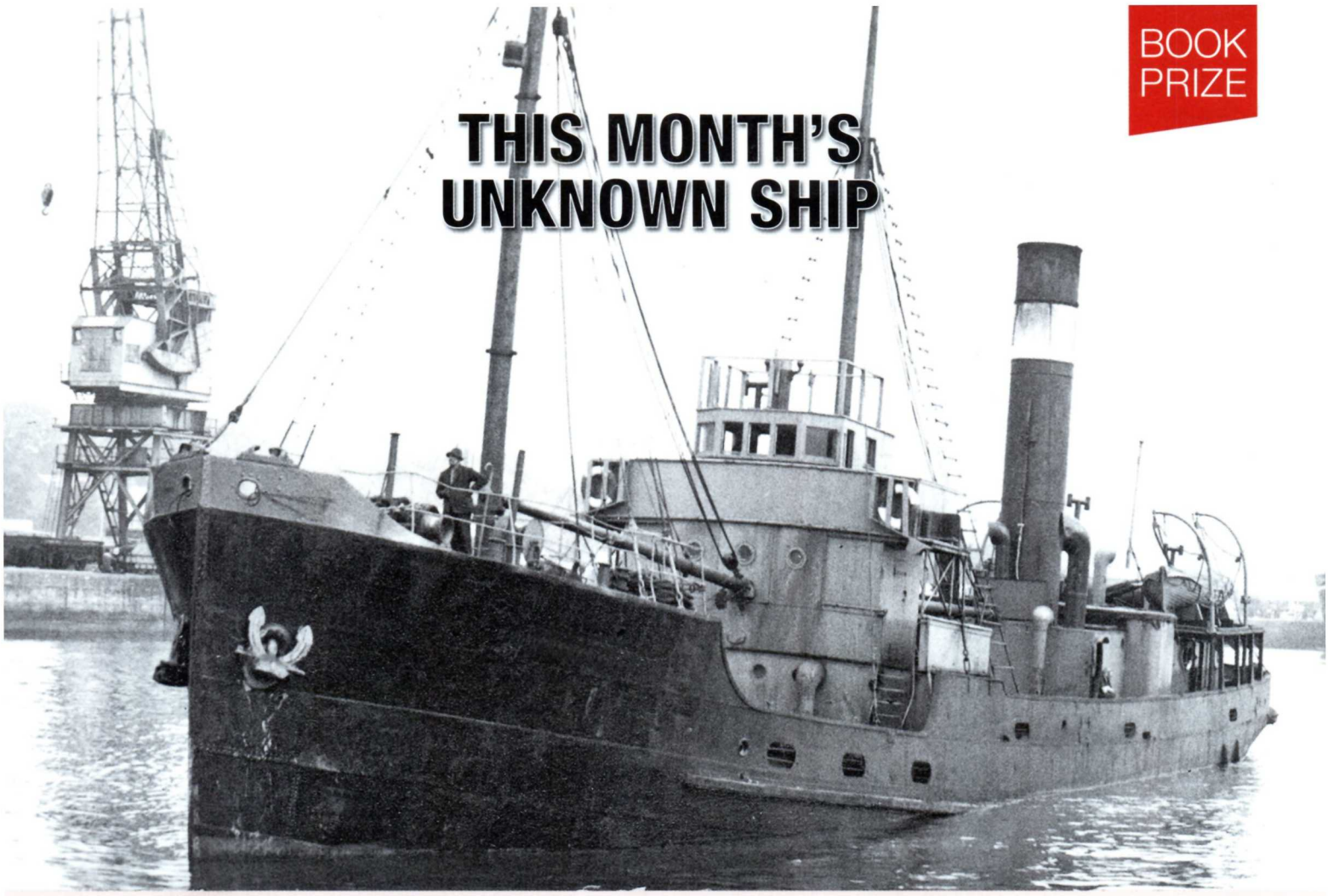

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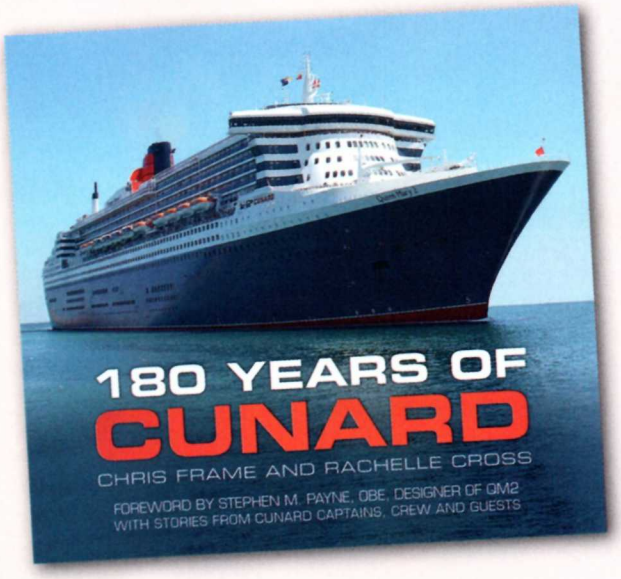
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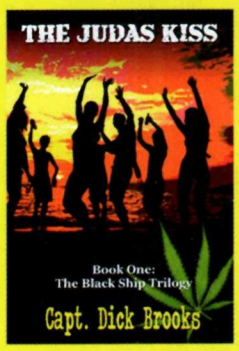

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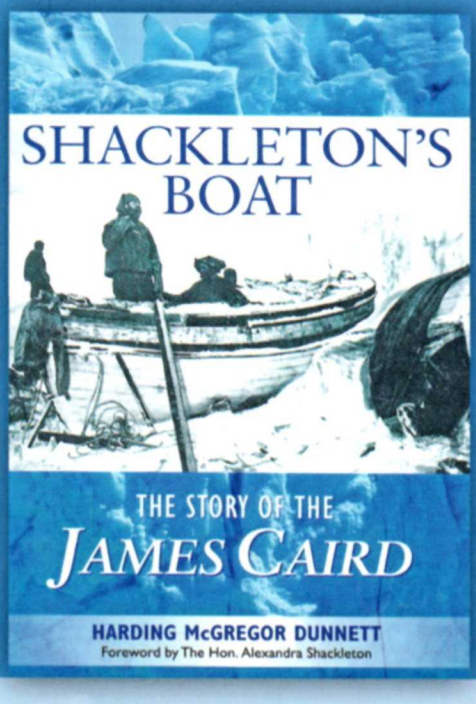

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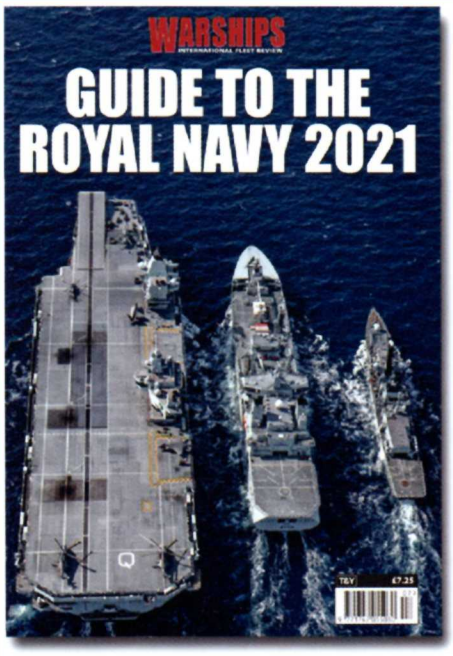

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